1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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or five years old. Before this they were called Tuta (male) and Tuti (female), i.e. "little one," and these expressions may persist and replace their proper names which in many instances seem to be forgotten, so that some children appeared to have no name at all. Small babies may be called Goraka or Gorakki, because they are reddish in colour, and so resemble the *gorakka* fruit (*Garcinia cambogia*). Apparently these names are not applied for more than the first few months after birth. It was said that the reason the names of young children were avoided was that to mention their names might attract the attention of evilly disposed *yaku* who might make the child ill or even kill it. We did not ascertain what were the names of the *yaku* who it was feared might injure the children, but it must be assumed that these spirits belonged to the third stratum of the Vedda religion defined on p. 149, and are either foreign spirits who have been adopted without losing their dangerous attributes, or the spirits of remote female ancestors (*hiriamma*) who sometimes steal children.

At Bandaraduwa, where there was much foreign influence, we had an example of the belief in the inadvisability of bringing children too closely in contact with the *yaku*. This is recorded on p. 216.

At Omuni we were told that in the old days there was no fixed time for the naming of a child. The father and mother give the child its name, usually choosing that of an ancestor, for there is no harm in speaking or using the name of a dead relative when the name is given to a child; thus our informant, the headman of Omuni, calls his second child by the name of his own dead father, though in his lifetime he would have addressed his father by his kinship term. Our informant gave his father's name to his second child, not to his first, because his father was alive when his first son was born. A woman's name is generally given to a granddaughter born after her death. Children are also commonly named after their maternal and paternal aunts and uncles.

The following lists of the names of males and females were given me by Mr Bibile and Tissahami, the Vedda Arachi; they were all said to be good Vedda names, and many of

To illustrate and prove these propositions we must examine in detail the beliefs of some of the communities in which each stage is respectively dominant. The Veddas met at Godatalawa and Sitala Wanniya form the best example of the first stage of belief. In comparing their beliefs it must, however, be remembered that the Godatalawa family have drifted away from their hunting grounds and are in dire want, and that their oldest man and leader (now quite infirm though still mentally vigorous) was never a shaman and consequently could give only the lay opinion of his group on religious matters. It must then not be assumed that no spirits beyond the *Nae Yaku*, Kande Yaka, and Bilindi Yaka were known to the shaman of the Galmeda community, although the fact that the laymen only knew of these spirits shows how vastly more important they were than any other.

The Sitala Wanniya people, on the other hand, were living in a condition which must have been general from ancient times up to about 70 years ago. Four of the five families had never made even rough chena or built bark houses, but lived on game, honey and yams and wandered about from rock-shelter to rock-shelter within their territory.

At Godatalawa Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were both known though they were not recognised as brothers, and Kande Yaka was said to be greater than all other *yaku*. They are the two principal *yaku* invoked in order to obtain game, but with them there are invoked three other *yaku*, who, it was stated, are not the spirits of the dead but have existed as *yaku* from the beginning. These were, however, of little importance, and our informant, an old man the senior of the group but not a shaman, did not remember their names. Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka would be invoked in order to obtain game at the *hiriberaha* ceremony, or simply when dancing round an arrow struck in the ground. These dances were not in gratitude for game already killed, but when the hunting had been successful, pieces of flesh from the neck and chest of the kill were cooked on the ashes and Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked to come to this offering which a few minutes later would be consumed by the Veddas. If part of the meat were not thus

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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presented to Kande Yaka the hunters would expect bad luck in future, and might even be bitten by snakes or attacked by bears.

The *Nae Yaku* are the spirits of the dead, they must report themselves to Kande Yaka as the chief of all the *yaku* and from him obtain permission to help the living and accept their offerings. Kande Yaka comes to the *Nae Yaku* ceremonies since the spirits of the dead could not be present without him. It was definitely stated that the spirits of the dead did not become *yaku* until the fifth day after death, but my informant knew nothing of the state of the spirits during this period though it was surmised that at least part of the time would be passed in seeking Kande Yaka or in his company, though there was no idea as to where Kande Yaka had his being. It was however stated, that the spirits of the dead were in hills, caves and rocks. The *Nae Yaku* including the spirit of the dead man are invoked on the fifth day after death. An offering is made of coconut milk and rice, if these are obtainable, but if not one consisting of yams and water is substituted. The shaman dances, holding in his hand a big ceremonial arrow for which no special name could be elicited, while the remainder of the community gather round. The shaman invokes the *Nae Yaku* and also Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka. The shaman becomes possessed and is supported lest he fall while the spirit of the deceased promises that yams, honey, and game shall be plentiful. He then sprinkles coconut milk or water from the offering on the relatives of the deceased as a sign of the spirit's favour. One or more of the relatives of the dead man may also become possessed. The shaman gives the relatives water and yams, putting their food into their mouths himself while he is possessed, and it appeared that this might cause the relatives to become possessed. At the end of the ceremony he asks the *Nae Yaku* to depart to where they came from and the spirits leave the offering.

Nothing was known concerning the Kataragam God or the *kolamadua* ceremony, though our informants said that they had heard of other Veddas performing this ceremony. Gale Yaka was not known, nor yet Wanagata Yaka.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
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At Sitala Wanniya the principal *yaku* are Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, Bambura Yaka and the *Nae Yaku*. According to these people Kande Wanniya killed his younger brother Bilindi when the latter was only an infant. The story is that their parents were out hunting when Bilindi, feeling hungry, began to cry and would not desist in spite of the endearments lavished upon him by Kande. At last Kande threw the child on the ground in despair and so killed him.

It appeared that as a hunting hero Bambura Yaka is on the whole as important as Kande Yaka, though he is certainly not looked upon as so benevolent nor so loved as the latter, who helps men to kill deer and never sends sickness. Bambura Yaka is a somewhat grim spirit who although he gives yams and helps men to kill pig, also sends sickness and must be invoked to remove it, and he is also invoked when dogs are lost or taken by leopards. Because of his giving yams he is sometimes known as Ale (yam) Yaka, and yams are offered to him together with other vegetable food when this can be obtained.

The *kiriboraha* ceremony is performed to obtain game, in gratitude for which the head and a portion of the flesh from the breast of every deer killed is cooked as an offering to Kande Yaka and is afterwards eaten by the community. If this were not done Kande Yaka would be angry and little game would be killed.

The *kiriboraha* seen at Sitala Wanniya is described on pp. 223 to 226, and the ceremony at which Bambura Yaka is invoked on pp. 237 to 245.

The spirits of the dead become the *Nae Yaku* and with Kande Yaka are invoked for success in hunting; a description of this ceremony will be found on pp. 230 to 233. A few days after a death the dead man is invoked for assistance in hunting, being addressed as *mal pasnas nanna*, and when the relatives of the group leave the cave to look for game they repeat the invocation as they move along. After this, if they are successful, they know that the spirit of the dead man has become powerful as a *Nae Yaku* and invoke him at the *kiriboraha* among the *Nae Yaku* called upon. The *Nae Yaku* must obtain permission

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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to accept offerings from Kande Yaka, and Kande Yaka must be invoked before the *Nae Yaku* to come to the offering, which should consist of coconuts, rice, areca nuts, betel leaves and, when obtainable, bananas.

We consider that the beliefs so far described represent the first stratum or basis of the Vedda religion and to be of its original substance. This is not the case with the remaining portion of the religion of the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya, which relates to certain foreign spirits who have become naturalised Vedda *yaku*. The Rahu Yaku are spirits of this sort. A fire ceremony occurs in the dance by which they are invoked and there is no doubt that these *yaku* are derived from the Sinhalese demon Gini Rahu Bandar. Yet in spite of this they have acquired a Vedda history, being regarded as long dead Veddas quite unconnected with the Rahu Bandar of the Sinhalese. The story concerning them is that long ago three Vedda brothers occupied a shelter together and one day one of them returned from hunting to find a stranger in the cave with his wife. The unknown rushed away and made good his escape, but the injured husband made up a big fire and in his rage and despair jumped into it. His *yaku* is one of the Rahu Yaku, the other two being the *yaku* of his two brothers who did not, however, burn themselves to death.

The help of the three Rahu Yaku is asked to cure sickness, to obtain success in hunting, and in collecting rock honey. Hunting and honey collecting both have their true Vedda patrons Kande Yaka and Dola Yaka, therefore the Rahu Yaku seem superfluous in these capacities. Further evidence as to their foreign origin is afforded by the fact that they carry "swords" (*kudiwa*), a weapon unknown to Veddas except in incantations[1], and that all three are considered somewhat dangerous, and cause sickness.

Indigollae Yaka, a foreign spirit (whose origin will be considered at length in Chapter VII), is looked upon as an attendant upon Kande Yaka in this community.

The names of certain spirits residing on various hills and

[1] Even these swords, one of which is shown in figure 11 (p. 156), had been rationalised and were said to represent *amole*.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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The names of certain spirits dwelling on certain hills and
776 [753] rocks were known; they were said not to be worshipped, although they were looked upon with awe and respect as they were believed to cause sickness.

These spirits are the Maha Yakini who are especially associated with the hills Nuwaragala, Walimbagala and a rock called Kalumal Ela. The chief of the Maha Yakini is the Maha Kiriamma, and the other Maha Yakini are her attendants. Although associated with rocks and hill-tops they are not invoked before taking honey in these places. It was stated that the Maha Yakini were formerly living people—old women—and that they were especially fond of children and might even steal them. It is for this reason that infants are protected by an arrow struck in the ground, and it is clear that something of their character as old Vedda women still survives in spite of their generally more or less unfriendly attributes.

Concerning the Maha Kiriamma nothing definite could be learnt: our informant had heard it said that she had been invoked in the old days, but knew nothing of this himself. Handuna said that what little knowledge they had of the Maha Kiriamma had travelled to them from the Bintenne Veddas near Horaborawewa[1].

771 In the Sitala Wanniya community, therefore, the second stratum is well developed and the third is indicated. The second and third strata, though probably not recently introduced, are, however, entirely subsidiary to the primitive cult of the friendly dead.

771 The Bandaraduwa community is one in which the second
769 stratum is so highly developed that at first sight it appears dominant, for after a death offerings are made to the Buddhist priest, but this is only done as an additional means of propitiation of the *Nae Yaku* who are still considered of the first importance, to whom an offering is made on the seventh day after death. Further,
771 Kande Yaka is still closely associated with the *Nae Yaku* and
776 is invoked with them, but he is no longer formally regarded as
777 the Lord of the Dead, that function has been usurped by Kanda Swami or Skanda known to these Veddas as "the Kataragam

[1] An invocation to the Maha Kiriamma (No. XXXIII), a fragment of a much longer formula (No. XXXIX), unknown to our informants, is given in Chapter X.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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God." He is one of the four gods who protect Ceylon, said to have come from India, and is worshipped chiefly by Tamils, who coming from the north-east frequently pass through the territory of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas on their pilgrimage to the temple of their God in the south of the island.

The following information concerning Kataragam is taken from Mr Herbert White's *Manual of Uva*.

Although the present temple is of brick and of no architectural pretensions it is the lineal descendant of the temple endowed some 2000 years ago by Dutugamunu, King of Mogora, as a thank-offering for assistance in overcoming the Tamil King Elala[1]. But Kataragam was a holy place before this, for the Mahavansa describes how the princes of Kataragam assisted at the planting of the shoots of the sacred Bo tree and how one of the miraculously produced offshoots was planted at Kataragam itself[2].

"The aspect and natural features of the country surrounding the temple of Kataragama are not calculated to make a favourable impression upon the eye when they first meet it. There is nothing in them to attract and invite it. Everything, with the exception of the temple and the river on which it stands, at the village of Kataragama and its vicinity looks wild, dreary and monotonous....

"The population of the village may be estimated at forty, including women and children; but it is liable to fluctuation at different periods of the year, from the influx and efflux of the pilgrims who resort to the temple. And I need scarcely add that the village, its adjacent hills, and the surrounding country, are all temple lands, and their occupants are attached to the temple service as its tenants[3]."

The guardian of the temple and its lands, the latter including a domain of some 60,000 acres, is a Buddhist headman resident at Buttala, and although there are now no Veddas near Kataragam, tradition states that there were formerly many Veddas in

[1] Kataragam is situated at the south-east of the island, on the left bank of the Menik-ganga, at a distance of some three forty miles north-east of Hambantota and about forty miles south-east of Buttala.

[2] Mahawansa, Chapter xxx.

[3] *Manual of Uva*, p. 43.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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the temple forests who in some sense served the temple and were known to the Sinhalese as the Kovil Vannami Veddas. Concerning these Nevill says: "This name means Vanniars of the Temple wilds, and they were from time immemorial guards of the Katthiragam temple. Their district was from Kumbukkan Ara to the Temple precincts, and north as far as the settled villages of Butala and Maha Vaddda Rata....They are said traditionally to descend from the Vaeddas who found the noble babe Valliamma left in the forest, and reared her as their child." Writing in 1886 Nevill points out that he had himself met the last remnants of these people most of whom were, however, "too reduced by want and disease to retain any memory for old customs."

At the present day the sanctity of Kataragam is reputed to be due to the tradition that the god halted on the highest of its seven hills on his return homeward from the conquest of the Asuras. "The particular spot....where Kataragama first met Valliammal in the guise of a hungry and thirsty *pandaram*, or mendicant, and begged of her to appease his hunger and quench his thirst, when she was watching her *chena* cultivation as the adopted daughter of a Vedda chief, and preparing cakes from a composition of honey and *sami* or milled flour, is pointed out at a distance of more than four miles from the temple. The precise spot again, with footmarks of an elephant on a rock, where she had suddenly encountered the ponderous brute and entreated the *pandaram* to protect her from its attacks, is also shown to the enthusiastic pilgrim[2]."

Now Valliamma was the daughter, or the adopted daughter, of a Vedda, and to this day such Veddas as those of Bandarawela who have come under the influence of Hinduism, although acknowledging that the Kataragam God, whom they do not call by any other name, is greater than the *Nae Yaku*, nevertheless hold him in less awe and treat him with less formality than do the Tamils and Sinhalese.

These Veddas know nothing of the other three great gods who protect Ceylon, and they regard Valliamma as a Vedda and speak of her as their elder sister (*akka*), while the Kataragam

[1] *Op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 180.

[2] *Manual of Uva*, p. 50.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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God is almost, if not quite, thought of as their brother-in-law. In fact the divinity of the God and of his consort has not among the Veddas reached the proportions it has among the Sinhalese and Tamils. It has already been stated that among the Sinhalese the spirits of the dead who desire to become *Bandāra* present themselves to the Kataragam God, and from him obtain permission to receive offerings of cooked food (*adukku*) in return for benefits to be conferred, or to smite men with sickness and other disasters, and we were told that the Kataragam God would not refuse any spirit who approached him with this request[1].

Further, these Veddas hold that the man may become possessed by the Kataragam God in the same way as by the *Nae Yaku*, and the god is worshipped at certain shrines in the Kovil Vanamai district which are traditionally associated with Veddas and are said to be of Vedda origin. One of these at a place called Kokkadichchola is said to have arisen as follows.

A Vedda and his wife were cutting the trunk of a tree for honey when the tree began to bleed and they found in it not a bee's nest but an infant. The Vedda became possessed and while this condition lasted the God within him announced that he was the Kataragam God and that a temple must be built to him there. When the Vedda returned to his senses the child could not be found, but in its place was an image of the God.

Returning to the beliefs held by the Bandaraduwa people concerning the *Nae Yaku*, these can be best illustrated and explained by considering the events following the death of a Kovil Vanamai man called Tuta.

The day after our arrival at Bandaraduwa a Vedda called Kaira came to our camp sobbing and shaking and protesting that he could not stay long with us as his brother was dead. He seemed deeply affected, though another brother, Kaurale, who was with him appeared quite calm, which led us to suspect that his uncontrollable agitation was due to something more than mere affection for the dead man, and we soon discovered

[1] This belief in spirits of the dead obtaining license from the Kataragam God is also held by some rural Sinhalese.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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total amounting to 2 Rs. 97 cents. The offering made to the *Nae Yaku* cost only 40 cents and consisted of a coconut, 50 betel leaves and a measure of rice.

The actual ceremony at which the spirit of the dead man was invoked and offerings made to it is described in Chapter IX, pp. 233 to 237.

Certain of the invocations used by the Kovil Vanamai Veddas, for instance, in invocation (No. XXXIV) to Indigollae Kiriamma for success in hunting and the invocations sung at the *kolamaduwa* ceremony, especially that to Unapane Kiriamma (No. XXXVIII), show how greatly foreign influence has altered the character of spiritual beings who existed in the original Vedda religion.

The Veddas of Uniche form a community in much the same stage of belief as the Veddas of Bandaraduwa. A few days after death the spirit of the deceased obtains permission from a "chief" to accept offerings and assist or harm the living. Our informants could not tell us who this chief was, but appeared to think that he had lived in comparatively recent times, and were confident that he was not Kande or Bilindi Yaka.

The *Nae Yaku*, including the spirit of the dead man, are invoked a few, perhaps five, days after a death has taken place. A pot of coconut milk with betel leaves in it is placed upon a rice pounder, and the shaman, holding a ceremonial arrow in each hand, dances round this, invoking the spirits, including that of the dead man. When possessed, the shaman sprinkles some of the coconut milk on the relatives and places betel leaves on their chests; the shaman also feeds the relatives from the bowl of coconut milk. The object of this dance is said to be to enable the *prana karaya* to become a *Nae Yaku*. It is clear that this is simply a condensed account of the ceremony we witnessed at Bandaraduwa, described on pp. 233 to 237.

The conditions prevailing at Henebedda, which at first were most puzzling, were found to be largely due to the influence of Tissahami "the Vedda Arachi," whose strong personality has been already referred to on p. 41. This man had taught the present Henebedda shaman much of his lore, and the latter

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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was but too anxious to assimilate and practise all that the Arachi would teach him. The knowledge he thus acquired spread to the younger members of the tribe, such as Sita Wanniya, who obviously took more interest in the ceremonial observances of his religion than any other of the younger men we met, and it was said that he would probably be the next shaman. The older men, on the other hand, appeared to know little of the developments introduced by the Arachi. To them Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and the *Nae Yaku* were not only the most important spiritual powers, but appeared to be the only ones who were at all well known; the simplicity of the eschatological beliefs of these older men has already been referred to on p. 126 and agrees wonderfully well with those described by Bailey in 1863. "The result of the most patient inquiry is, that the Veddahs have a vague belief in a host of undefined spirits, whose influence is rather for good than evil. ...They believe that the air is peopled by spirits, that every rock and every tree, every forest and every hill, in short every feature of nature, has its *genius loci*; but these seem little else than mere nameless phantoms, whom they regard rather with mysterious awe than actual dread....But besides this vague spirit-worship, they have a more definite superstition, in which there is more of system. This is the belief in the guardianship of the spirits of the dead. Every relative becomes a spirit after death, who watches over the welfare of those who are left behind. These, which include their ancestors and their children, they term their 'nehya yakoon,' kindred spirits. They describe them as 'ever watchful, coming to them in sickness, visiting them in dreams, giving them flesh when hunting.' In short in every calamity, in every want they call on them for aid; and it is curious that the shades of their departed children, 'bilindoo yakkoon,' or infant spirits, as they call them, are those which they appear most frequently to invoke....

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"The ceremonies with which they invoke them are few as they are simple. The most common is the following: an arrow is fixed upright in the ground, and the Veddah dances slowly round it, chanting this invocation, which is almost musical in its rhythm:

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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number of these *yaku*, especially Irugal Bandar and the other Bandar, may have been introduced since Bailey's time. It is even possible that Tissahami may be responsible in part.

The reference to King Vijaya shows that Kalu Bandar has nothing to do with the primitive beliefs of the Veddas, for no Vedda knew anything of Vijaya or Kuweni.

Before describing the beliefs of the village Veddas, among whom the third stratum of thought is dominant, the condition of the Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula (who have moved there from Mudugala) must be considered and compared with those of both the wilder and the village Veddas. Many of the *yaku* of the less sophisticated communities were known to them, and some invoked by the village Veddas were also called upon at Unuwatura Bubula. Although Kande Yaka was known and considered powerful to send game and cure sickness, apparently he was no longer Lord of the Dead, as he was not invoked at the *alutyahagama* (see p. 260) to which the *Nae Yaku* were called. A structure called a *kulatyahana* was built for him and a Hindu trident as well as an *ande* was held when he was invoked. Biliadi Yaka was known, but we have no note as to whether he was considered the brother of Kande Yaka or no. Bambura Yaka and his attendants known to the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya and Uniche were unknown here. Pata Yaka (Sitala Wanniya) had been heard of but had never been invoked. The Wanegatha Yaku were of considerable importance here, they were said to be the *yaku* of long dead Veddas who had perished in their rock-shelter owing to a fall of rock. Indigollae Yaka (the attendant of Kande Yaka at Sitala Wanniya) was known here and considered extremely powerful; when really short of food, offerings are made to him and his wife Indigollae Yakini, and the shaman thrusts an *ande* into the roof of his hut and hangs on it a string of beads which are kept specially for this purpose, and then Indigollae Yaka sends game. We were told that no charm or invocation accompanied this action.

We did not realise at the time of our visit that Indigollae Yaka might be another name for Gale Yaka, but this appears not unlikely in view of information furnished by Mr Parker, and the fact that Gale Yaka was here invoked with the *Nae*

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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Yaku, while at nearly all the village Vedda communities Indigollae Yaka was said to bring the *Nae Yaku*. Certainly Gale Yaka, Indigollae Yaka and Kande Yaka were all known by name, but there seemed much confusion between them all: perhaps Gale Yaka had become Lord of the Dead as he was invoked before the *Nae Yaku* in the same ceremony; Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked at a separate ceremony. No hint was given us that Gale Yaka and Indigollae Yaka were names for the same spirit, but of course this may have been so. The information that Indigollae Yaka was extremely powerful both to bring evil upon man and to help them to get game was, however, volunteered and, as already mentioned, some old, specially valuable beads were kept to be offered to him.

Gale Yaka was also invoked to give success when gathering honey; he appeared to be associated with a certain rock near Mahaella, and we were told that beads were worn during the ceremony.

The Maha Kiriamma was said to be one of the most powerful of the *Maha Yakino*, a class of female spirits who were said to send sickness[1]. Unapane Yakini (Unapane Kiriamma) was another *yakini* of the same class who was thought to live at Omunigala. Here as among many other groups of Veddas the *Maha Yakino* were associated with hill tops, and it was the custom for people collecting the honey of the rock bee to leave a piece of the comb *in situ*, saying, "Eat, O Kiriamma[2]."

When the *Maha Yakino* are invoked to cure sickness a basket is used in which are put a bead necklace and bangles and the leaves of a *na* tree. The shaman becomes possessed and raises the basket above the patient's head and prophesies recovery. The leaves are subsequently thrown away, but the beads and bangles are preserved for the *Yakino*. Presumably this is the origin of the similar or identical use of these objects in the *kolamaduwa* ceremony which, however, appears to be of Sinhalese origin.

[1] Nothing was ever said to cause us to suspect that she was connected with Gale Yaka or Indigollae Yaka.

[2] Kiriamma is in the plural in the Sinhalese, showing that all the *Maha Yakino* in the neighbourhood were invoked to partake.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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Gange Bandar, unknown among the wilder Veddas but worshipped by all village Veddas, was known at Unuwatura Bubula.

OMUNI.

The history of this settlement dating back to the first half of the last century has been given on pp. 45 and 46. The Omuni folk believe there are spirits (*yaku*) everywhere in the jungle, but none have seen them; further, there are many *yaku* of each kind or species such as the Indigollae Yaku, the Dadayan Yaku and many others including the Gale Yaku called the Jungle Yaku, who do not, however, frequent the jungle around Omuni. It was said that Ganga Bandar Deyo who lives in rocks in the river is greater than any of these. Omuni was one of the first Vedda settlements we visited, and as the importance of Sinhalese and Tamil gods and demons was not then appreciated no questions concerning these were asked. It is, however, reasonable to suppose that the Kataragam God and other mighty *deviyo* are worshipped. The spirits of the dead (*Nae Yaku*) are believed to be associated with rocks; on the whole they are kindly spirits, but it is necessary to invoke and propitiate them.

A *Nae Yaku* ceremony is held some little time after a death has taken place, at which the shaman dances with an *aude* before a *maesa* on which is placed an offering of cooked yams and other food, and the *maesa* is decorated with special clothes kept for that purpose. The *aude* is held in the smoke arising from gum-resin thrown on glowing charcoal, and then pressed on the head of all the male members of the community. If this were not done little game would be killed.

We have an account of another ceremony performed to cure sickness and when the chena had been reaped, but it is not clear what spirits were invoked at this; presumably the most important of these were certain of the *yaku* other than the *Nae Yaku*, though the *Nae Yaku* may have played a subordinate part. A shed or very rough house is built and hung with special clothes reserved for this purpose, those shown to us being rather old and worn pieces of linen woven at Batticaloa. A roughly made shelf forming a sort of altar is built in the shed on which

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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though incomplete we have no doubt of its substantial accuracy as far as it goes. We had considerable doubts as to the reliability of our Dambani information, but these have been removed lately as far as they affect Kande Yaka and the *Nae Yaku* owing to the kindness of Mr Hartshorne who allowed us to look through a number of notes collected among these people thirty years ago. And since the information obtained from the Arachi of Belligala was correct on these points, there seems to be no reason to disbelieve the rest of his information.

According to the Arachi, who, it must be remembered, as stated on p. 49, knows the Dambani folk well, there are three important classes of *yaku*.

The first of these are the *Nae Yaku* who do not go to Kande Yaka but to Indigollae Yaka, who lives on a hill (*kande*) called Indigollae Kande which never has been seen. Indigollae Yaka is first invoked at the *Nae Yaku* ceremony and with him come the *Nae Yaku*. An *ande* is used in calling upon Indigollae Yaka in this ceremony, while the *Nae Yaku* are invoked by means of a cloth and beads; as among other Veddas an offering of food is made.

We could not discover with certainty at Dambani what was the relative importance of the *Nae Yaku* and the two other classes of *yaka*, but at Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle our informants made it quite clear that the *yaku* of recent ancestors were the most important. Thus Kuma stated that he considered his father's *yaka* to be the most important of all and that this spirit was invoked alike to send game and in thanks for game killed.

Bandia of Wellampelle said the most important *yaka* he knew was Punchi Badena, his father's father; his mother is dead but her *yaka* is not so important[1]. Punchi Badena is invoked to get game and honey or when people are sick. At all three villages a structure, which from the description given to us resembles an *alutyakagama*, is built for the invocation of the *Nae Yaku*, to whom the customary offerings are made before

[1] We have no note that the father of Kuma was dead; although we do not remember definitely inquiring about this our impression is that both parents had been dead for some time.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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being eaten by the community. A man becomes a *yaku* directly he is dead, nothing is buried with him and the contents of his betel pouch are used in the ordinary way. The *Nae Yaku* ceremony is held some days after death, one, or according to another informant two, *ande* being used.

At Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle neither Bilindi Yaka nor Bambura Yaka was known, and these two *yaku* were also unknown at Dambani where, however, the Belligala Arachi said that Kande Yaka gives luck in hunting. This has been confirmed by Mr Hartshorne's notes, so that although our informants at Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle stated that they did not know this *yaka*, too much stress must not be laid upon this.

The other two classes of *yaku* invoked at Dambani are tree and rock *yaku*. Both send sickness and are invoked with dancing and offerings to remove it, the stone magic described on p. 143 being used to determine which *yaka* is responsible for the disease. The most important rock *yaku* are Mawaragala Yaka, Rerangala Yaka, Barutugala Yaka, and Mehaluku Yakini. The latter is associated with a rock Batugala near Alutnuwara, the others with the peaks whose names they bear.

Two tree *yaku* were mentioned, each having a number of attendants. These tree *yaku* are named Na Gaha Yaka (Na tree Yaka) and Bo Gaha Yaka (Bo tree Yaka), that is to say they are called after the trees with which they are associated, and the Arachi pointed out that tree *yaku* habitually lived in trees of the species after which they are named. We could not discover any facts suggesting that these tree *yaku* were considered to represent the life of the tree.

Horaborawewa.

The surroundings and physical characters of the Veddas of Horaborawewa have been described on p. 53. The shaman is the local Sinhalese headman, who stated that the same *yaku* are invoked by Veddas and Sinhalese alike. Seren (Riri) Yaka is the most important *yaka*, Wiloya Yaka and Kalu Yaka are also known, and it was stated that the latter spirit was also called Wangata Yaka. Our informant had not heard of Kande Yaka or Bilindi Yaka, and it was certain that the worshipped *yaku*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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were generally associated with rocks and were not the spirits of the dead. There is however an exception, namely, Dehigole Yaka, whose history is as follows. A man from Dehigole, a Vedda, went to Kandy to see the king, probably Sri Vikram Rajah Sinha, the last of the Sinhalese kings, who was dethroned early in the last century. On his way back he was killed by an elephant, and now his spirit looks after the chena and prevents elephants breaking into and destroying the crops. A leafy branch is tied to a pole or dead tree in the chena, and Dehigole Yaka and other spirits are invoked, an offering of sweetmeats, jaggery, coconuts and rice cooked in coconut milk being made and subsequently eaten by the owners of the chena. There was said to be no invocation of the *yaku* of the recent dead, nor before taking honey which is obtained from trees.

LINDEGALA.

The "Veddas" described on p. 76 from Lindegala in the neighbourhood of Kallodi worship a large number of male and female spirits including the Bo Gaha Yaka and the Na Gaha Yaka[1].

As already indicated the people of Lindegala are Veddas in scarcely more than name. The most important of them, an old man with his son and son-in-law, visited us at Kallodi. The old man who is tall and presented typical Sinhalese features is a renowned *vederala* (medicine-man) and is employed by the Sinhalese for miles round. He brought with him to show us two ceremonial arrows with which he invoked the spirits. One of these arrows is of the shape of a Hindu trident, the other is of the usual Vedda shape and is notable on account of the silver *bo* leaf with which the blade is inlaid. This *aude* is shown in Plate XXV. Both of these had been presented by the Sinhalese king to one of his ancestors, apparently about 100 years ago.

[1] Although these *yaku* were spoken of in the singular there were many individuals of each species. Some of the other more important *yaku* which were worshipped were named, Wetegala Wanniya, Gala Degala Wanniya, Gerugala Wanniya, Maldampaha Yaka, Lenat Yaka, Eheregala Yaka, Meheregal Yaka, Komal Yaka, Walmat Yaka, Hittangala Yaka, Mikmal Naida Yaka, Kehelpotegala Yaka, Mawaregala Yaka, Herang Yaka, Ittihangala Wanniya, Mulehangala Wanniya, Gara Rajah Wanniya. These were only an insignificant fraction of the total number of *yaku* known to our oldest informant.

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411 The story told us was that when this ancestor, who was a Vedda
778 headman and a shaman of great fame, gave up his jungle life
173 and began to cultivate, the Sinhalese king sent him the two *aude* as tokens that he granted the land on which he settled to him and his descendants for ever. It seems that previously to this they had led a more or less unsettled life, or had perhaps been dispossessed of their own territory during the troubles of the period. The arrows were in fact "seisin" and were considered the equivalent of a *sannasa*, the inscribed metal plate or rock face on which grants of land were formerly recorded. Inquiry showed that it was by no means uncommon for a man to be given a ceremonial example of an implement of his trade or profession as a *sannasa*. Thus, in the Kandy Museum there is a beautifully worked Bull's bell (*gonminigediya*) given as *sannasa* to Rantun Mudianse of Walala head of the Pattiya or Nilamakkara people by King Narendara Singhe of Kundasale who reigned 1706—1739. We may also refer to a ceremonial weaver's shuttle in the Colombo Museum and to the lacquered arrows described in Chapter XI.

976 The *Nae Yaku*, Kande Yaka, and Wanegata Yaka are con-
975 sidered less important than the tree *yaku* and the host of *yaku* alluded to above. Indigollae Yaka and Rahu Yaka are recognised but not considered very powerful, though it was said that all these were formerly invoked to give success in hunting. The *bolamaduwa* ceremony is known, very many spirits being invoked including Unapane Kiriamma. The *Nae Yaku* become attendants on some of the *yaku* mentioned in the above list and these are invoked first and bring the *Nae Yaku* with them, but it appeared that it was no longer the custom to hold a *Nae Yaku* ceremony within a few days of a death. Among the *Nae Yaku* mentioned was the spirit of the man on whom one of the last Sinhalese kings had bestowed the land of which the inlaid *aude* shown in Plate XXV is the *sannasa*. Another *yaka* greatly venerated is that of Kimbul Otbe, an important individual living a few generations ago concerning whom Nevill has written at some length[1].

[1] Nevill, who says that he could find no clue to his identity, still regarded Kimbul Otbe as "a great historical personage," for "The Sinhalese of the Eastern Province

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KALUKALAEBA.

The most important spiritual agencies are the following:— Gange Bandar Deyo, Kataragam Deyo, Indigoliae Yaka, Rerang Yaka, Riri Yaka (Sinhalese), Marulu Yaka, Rahu Yaka, and Elle Yakini. 776

In spite of the fact that the people of Kalukalaeba keep cattle and are predominantly agriculturalists Gange Bandar Deyo, who lives on the hill Yangala beyond Hemberewa and gives luck in hunting and honey gathering, was said to be especially important. He is invoked when game is scarce, but it is the Kataragam God who gives increase of yams and vegetable food. They do not dance to him but make offerings of cooked brinjal and pumpkins, which are left for half-a-day on a rude altar and then eaten. Chena are also under the protection of the Kataragam God to whom offerings are made after the produce has been reaped, some of every kind of fruit being cooked and exposed in the chena for some hours before it is eaten by the people. 776 782

At Kalukalaeba Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and Bambura Yaka were unknown. The spirits of the dead are recognised as the *Nae Yaku*, but they are certainly thought of as far less important than a number of other spiritual beings to be immediately considered. They are however invoked, but it seemed that this was not done habitually immediately after a death, but at quite uncertain intervals to remove sickness. The father of 775 755

and Bintenne, and Nilgala, alike agree that he was a great and powerful prince. They speak of him often, and call him Barunegala Kimbul-Horat wadiyanse Rajapat Wannivanshe. From the name Horat it is manifest he headed some great political movement.... Raja-pat probably means king-maker, and the whole title may be translated as 'His Excellency the General Kimbul-Otbe of Barunegala, the king-maker Lord-of-the-Marches,' or also the 'King-made Lord-of-the-Marches,' wanni, literally a forest or waste, being used exactly as we use the term 'marches,' of Wales or Scotland. The respect of the Sinhalese, and this elaborate title of highest honour, show that this great Vaddda Chieftain headed an army that replaced one of the Sinhalese kings upon the throne of his ancestors. I think it is more probable he figured in a comparatively modern war than in a very ancient one....It is perfectly likely that Kimbul-Otbe was a prince of the Sinhala royal family, who married a Vaddda....

"The supposition that Kimbul-Otbe was a Sinhala, and that he married either a Bandara or an Unapana lady, would thus account for the otherwise unexplained fact that the Sinhalese say some of their oldest and best families also descended from Kimbul-Otbe, though they did not know whether he was really a Vaddda or was claimed by the Vaddas in mistake, having been their prince." *Op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 176.

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775 the present shaman was called Suwanda, and no dance to his
755 spirit was held till a long time, perhaps as much as a year, after his decease. But when the shaman's mother became ill he was invoked and offerings were made, with the result that the patient got well. In connection with this it was explained that it was not
775 unusual for the *Nae Yaku* to make even their nearest and dearest
753 relatives ill for the sake of the offerings they would then receive.

It was stated that the *Nae Yaku* are not allowed to kill people but only to make them ill, permission to do this and to accept offerings being obtained from Kataragam Deyo, Saman Deyo, and Numeriya Deyo. We could not ascertain with
775 certainty whether the *Nae Yaku* have anything to do with sending luck in hunting, but if they are concerned in this they clearly play quite a subordinate part. When taking honey a little is left at the foot of the tree, this was said to be for the
[742] *Nae Yaku*, who may be called to it by some such expression as "here is honey, be pleased to eat[1]."

A female spirit Elle Yakini is invoked when a woman is
[843] pregnant, to protect mother and child; beads which belong to the shaman, who seems to keep them for this purpose, are placed on a piece of cloth and invocations are spoken. After
[844] childbirth a bower apparently resembling the *kolamaduwa* is made, Elle Yakini is invoked and an offering of food made to her. At the time of our visit it was said that a dance would shortly be held to Elle Yakini in thanks for having given a woman, who at first had difficulty in nursing her child, an abundant flow of milk. Elle Yakini will be invoked with an ordinary hunting arrow, and when possessed by her the shaman will gasp out some such formula as this "Now I have made you well, remember me in future." Offerings would not be made to Elle Yakini until her help was again needed.

ELAKOTALIYA.

776 The most important spiritual agencies are the gods and demons who are worshipped at Kalukalaeba. Indigollae Yaka is said to give good luck to hunters, for neither Kande Yaka,

[1] The geographical position of Kalukalaeba allows the Veddas of this group an opportunity of collecting such honey.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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Bilindi Yaka nor Bambura Yaka is known. The *Nae Yaku* are of the company of Indigollae Yaka, and with the latter are invoked after a death, but the *Nae Yaku* are not asked for good luck in hunting. The *Nae Yaku* are invoked after every death; coconut, jaggery (palm sugar), and rice are placed on a *maesa*, offered to the *yaku* and afterwards eaten by the shaman and other members of the community. While invoking the spirits the shaman holds a cloth in his hands but no *aude*.

ULPOTA.

The Kataragam God, Gane Deyo and Vihara Deyo, are worshipped, as probably are many others. These spirits are all considered more important than the *Nae Yaku*, and it is to their aid that success in hunting and in honey getting is largely attributed, nevertheless it was clear that the *Nae Yaku* were thought of as helpful in these activities. Our informant stated that they had never heard of Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, or Bambura Yaka, nor had they heard of the gods of the coast Veddas Kapalpe or Kadupe.

The spirits of the dead become *Nae Yaku*, and it is customary for a ceremony to be held eight days after a death, at which the spirits of all the recent dead are invoked. It was said that these spirits of the deceased joined the other *Nae Yaku* without asking permission from any other spiritual being and that the *Nae Yaku* came when they were invoked unaccompanied by any other spirit. The shaman does not hold an *aude* in his hand when invoking the *Nae Yaku*, but some rice and cooked pumpkin are put upon a *maesa* before which he dances. At the side of this is a pot of rice covered with a cloth supported on a rice pounder. The shaman faces the east whilst dancing, and appeals to all remembered *Nae Yaku* by name. It was said to be rare for any but the shaman to become possessed.

The *Nae Yaku* give honey and luck in hunting, and it is in order to obtain their favour that they are invoked, for if they were not they would give bad luck. When collecting tree honey the name of a dead man is called and he is requested to accept a little honey which is left at the foot of the tree for a short time, after which it is eaten by the honey gatherers. After killing game

1;Seligmann & Seligmann 5-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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a piece of flesh is offered to the *Nae Yaku* who are called by name, and then the Veddas eat it themselves.

Vihara Deyo is considered to send sickness, and he is invoked to make men whole again. Rice is cooked with milk usually obtained from the Tamil village of Horawila, and this with betel and areca nut is put upon a *maesa*. Only the shaman dances, and after the ceremony the offering is eaten by the whole community, including the sick man. Our informant did not know how the *yaku* or *deyo* causing the sickness was discovered, that being left to the shaman.

YAKURE.

The important spiritual agencies are:—Gange Bandar Deyo, Genikandia Deyo, Palugamman Deyo, Vihara Deyo, Mangara Deyo. Our informants knew of Indigollae Yaka but did not know if he ever was a man or had always been a spirit. Nothing was known of Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, or Bambura Yaka. Dead shamans are thought to become *yaku*, and it is the spirits of these people who are the *Nae Yaku*: the fate of the spirits of ordinary folk is uncertain, but they do not become *Nae Yaku*. The *Nae Yaku* are danced to and invoked with the other *yaku* in order to cure sickness, but apparently they are not considered particularly important. A *maesa* is made and a cloth put over it, and on it are laid flowers of many kinds, betel leaves and areca nuts. Incense is burned before these offerings, in front of which the shaman dances facing the east. In some instances the *maesa* is built inside the temple, the shaman holds a cloth in his hand and a pot of rice cooked in milk is placed by the *maesa* on a rice pounder[1]. This is not tasted during the dance, but is eaten afterwards by the shaman and the sick man and other individuals of the community[2].

Kataragam Deyo is invoked especially to protect the chena, and at harvest an offering is made which is afterwards eaten as at Elakotaliya.

[1] It must be remembered that Yakure is a great cattle breeding centre.

[2] This is an interesting contrast to the practice which Mr Parker informs us prevails in the south of the island, where food given to spirits is not eaten at all but is exposed in the jungle or some deserted place. The fact that at Yakure food offered to spirits many of whom are of Sinhalese or Tamil origin, is eaten, is clearly a remnant of the Vedda belief that the spirits invoked are in the main beneficent.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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Mangara Deyo is invoked to protect cattle. About a month before our visit a nephew of the shaman suffered from headache and fever and woke up in the middle of the night in a great state of alarm. It was ascertained by stone augury that Mangara Deyo had sent the sickness, offerings were made to him, and the youngster speedily recovered.

There are no dances at a man's death or invocations to the spirits of the dead, nor did there appear to be any particular spirit who gave luck in hunting, indeed it seemed that game was little sought, the whole activity of the community being concentrated on cattle breeding.

The temple of Mangara Deyo is a small bare hut, with the roof projecting a few feet beyond that wall in which the door is cut. The inside of the temple is quite bare except for a narrow wooden rack about a foot wide which runs round the two side and back walls at a height of about four feet from the ground. In one corner of this was a pile of *anade* of all shapes and sizes which were said to belong to Mangara Deyo.

Rotawaewa.

Mr G. W. Jayawardene writes as follows concerning the beliefs of the Tamankaduwa "Veddas" described on p. 56. "They regard Adukganna Hulawali Yaka and Vedi Yaka as the important *yaku*. Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit to whom they look to be cured of sickness. When any one is ill he or she or someone on their behalf puts aside one or two cents which are wrapped in a clean piece of cloth and from each house an offering of food is made. Vedi Yaka is the spirit they look to for help in getting game. When an animal is killed the heart is taken and roasted and offered on a stick with the end split into four to hold the heart under a tree." Commenting on this Mr B. Horsburgh writes, "Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit of a Vedda who was killed by King Mahasena for refusing to leave Minneriya tank when he was going to restore it. The name Adukganna Hulawaliyaka means Hulawali Yaka who takes the *adukkawa* or present of food (from the offering made to him). He is only seen in dreams,

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
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776 when he takes the shape of a well made young man dressed
775 in white and with a white stick in his hand. Vedi Yaka also
787 appears only in dreams, as a black man in a cloth with nothing else particular about him[1]."

The Avoidance of Certain Foods.

262 It must be assumed that the following prohibitions are of a religious or of a magico-religious nature, and for this reason they are included in the present chapter. They do not appear to be connected with totemism, yet we do not feel confident that they are derived from Hinduism, as is suggested by the Sarasins[2]. In this doubt we have the support of Mr Parker who writes: "This prohibition appears to have no connection with Hinduism, or the common Brown Monkey, *Rilawā* (*Macacus pileatus*), would be included, and also the Rat, as the vāhana of Ganēsa, and the Turtle as representative of Vishnu; or some of these[3]."

Bailey writes, "The Veddahs eat the flesh of elk, deer, monkeys, pigs, the iguana, and pengolin—all flesh indeed, but that of oxen, elephants, leopards, and jackals; and all birds, except the wild or domestic fowl. They will not touch lizards, bats, or snakes.

"They can assign no reason for their abstinence from the flesh of these beasts and birds which I have enumerated, but their objection to beef and fowls, though quite unexplained, is decidedly the most marked, so much so that during my inquiries I found that they spontaneously expressed their antipathy, though it required cross examination to elicit the fact that they also avoid the other kinds of flesh[4]."

We are able to confirm Bailey's statement as far as it concerns the flesh of mammals, with the reservation that most Veddas do not eat porcupine. With regard to birds, the Veddas of Henebedda said they should not eat fowls or eagles. The majority of Veddas, including even the degenerate Veddas of the coast, avoid eating fowl, though many of the settled village Veddas keep them for sale or for the sake of their eggs, and in

[1] Both the passages quoted are from a report by Mr Horsburgh to the Colonial Secretary.

[2] *Op. cit.* p. 418.

[3] *Ancient Ceylon*, p. 191.

[4] *Op. cit.* pp. 287 and 288.

Sinhalese demonology is very interesting.... There are many classes of Yaksa; but I believe that this Bandara worship is the only indigenous portion of it. I have traced practically all the other demons to Southern India, although the Kapuralas claim that a few others, in addition to the Bandaras, are of local origin. They themselves admit that all the rest are imported from India."

Among these immigrant spiritual beings is one, the Gale Deviyo, who appears to be originally identical with the Gale Yaka of the village Veddas and the Indigollas Yaka of other groups. Mr Parker states that the Gale Deviyo is popularly supposed to have come from India with his Prime Minister Kurumbuda; he is worshipped in Uva, the North Central and North Western Provinces. "He is a beneficent God, who gives food and rain and guards the crops and prevents or checks epidemics." Two miles from the temple at Nirammulla are two caves, and in one of these Kurumbuda killed sixty priests who were there assembled, in order to take possession of the cave himself. Gale Deviyo is danced to annually in July or August on the summit of crags. The dancer, called *asumastirala* (i.e. one subject to command) represents the god; in the temple he assumes a three-tiered hat and holds a golden katty (*ran kaetta*), and the spirit of the god enters him without any of the usual phenomena of possession. The man who made the katty (or one of his descendants) and the dhobie who washed his clothes accompany the dancer to the foot of the crag which he ascends alone. The hat, katty, and flounces which the dancer wears are kept in the temple.

"In the North Central Province the chief temple of the God is at Indigollaewa, on the southern side of Kalawaewa. The 'dancing rock' (*natana gala*) near it is called Andiyagala. In the North Western Province his chief temple is at Nirammulla, 15 miles N.E. of Kurunegala; and its two 'dancing rocks' are on Devagiriya 'the Hill of the God,' where his original temple was established in a cave which he took by force from the monks killed by Kurumbuda."

Mr Parker points out that it is quite certain that the Gale Deviyo is identical with the Gale Yaka of some at least of the village Veddas, for "there is the same service to him everywhere,

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and the same tradition of his coming from Malawara-desa, our Malaiyalam, accompanied by his minister Kurumbuda, called a Yaka, but also by the Kandians a Devata or Godling.

"I got the same account of him from the Tamil-speaking Vaeddas, the Vaeddas of Maha Oya district, the forests south of it, Maduru Oya district, and the extreme south of the Batticaloa district, and the Sinhalese of Uva, North Central Province and North Western Province. He is worshipped in all these three Sinhalese districts. There can be no doubt as to his being a God of the Village Vaeddas.... All in these districts appeal to him in cases of epidemics.... The Tamil-speaking Veddas told me that although called *yaka* he is really their God of all, who taught them everything they know and the names of things and animals, and instructed them regarding their dances.

"The Tamil-speaking Vaeddas address him as 'Lord God,' 'Lord of the Country,' 'Hill Lord' (Maleiya Swami).

"The Tamil-speaking Vaeddas give me the very same account of the arrival of the Gale Yaka and the Gale Deviyo as those of Bintenne and the Sinhalese of the North Western Province. They all agree that he came from Malawara-desa—the Malayalam country—with one minister, and the only point where they do not agree is as to the place where he landed. Some say Kokkagala, others Valeichena on the coast, and the Sinhalese say he came to some hills in their part."

Mr Parker states that the Sinhalese all call Gale Deviyo the god of the Veddas, and the village Veddas told him that a ceremony similar to that described in the North Central Province is performed on Omungala and Kokkagala in the Bintenne. There are temples to him throughout all the village Vedda districts "just like their own huts that might be passed without notice unless specially informed what they are." Where there is no rocky crag on which to dance, the ceremony is performed beneath a tree, and this occurs among the coast Veddas. Mr Parker points out that Gale Deviyo must not be confused with Gale Bandar who came with four or five followers in a stone boat from India and landed near Galle.

To sum up, Mr Parker's observations show that the Gale Deviyo of the Sinhalese of the North Central Province is regarded

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as an immigrant God from beyond the ocean. Mr Parker states that he is also the most important God of the coast Veddas, and this is supported by our observation that the coast Veddas call their most important God Kappalpei, "Ship Spirit" (Mr Parker suggests "ship demon"), and say that he came from over seas. It is therefore clear that among Sinhalese and coast Veddas a foreign spiritual agency is considered the most important of the Gods and temples are raised to him. This God is danced to on certain crags by the Sinhalese, and similar rites occur among some of the sophisticated Veddas of the Bintenne who also say that the spiritual agency Gale Yaka whom they invoke in this ceremony is a foreigner.

In many communities of Veddas, far less sophisticated than the village Veddas, we were told about spirits who inhabited rock-masses or hills such as Walimbagala, but these did not at all correspond to the Gale Deviyo of Mr Parker. It was perfectly clear that to the majority of Veddas they really were simply local unnamed *yaka*, who were spoken of by the name of the peak or rock supposed to be their favourite haunt, and in only one advanced community were these spirits bearing hill names considered to be immigrants from India[1]. We therefore consider that the Gale Yaka of the village Veddas has been adopted from the Sinhalese by the more advanced communities of Veddas where alone he is known, and that although the foreign rite of dancing to him on crags is still retained, he has to some extent taken on Vedda characters as witnessed by his invocation at the *alutyahagama* ceremony described in Chapter IX.

The temple of the Gale Deviyo at Indigollaewa in the North Central Province has already been mentioned. His wife the Kiriamma is worshipped here with him, and God and Goddess are sometimes spoken of as Indigollaewa Devia and Indigollaewa Kiriamma. Concerning him Mr Parker writes, "I collected accounts of him in all parts, and about Indigollaewa in the North Central Province where his temple is, and they all agree that he is the Gale Yaka, while the Sinhalese of Indigollaewa know him

[1] Cf. Chapter IX, in which is described the *rasnala* ceremony by which these spirits are propitiated.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
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only as the Gale Deviyo." "The Sinhalese of Indigollaewa and some of the settled Veddas near Maha Oya make offerings to the Gale Yaka and the Kiriamma, as his wife, together; no offerings, however, are made to her on the hill tops, which are reserved for the Gale Yaka.... She is a great food provider for the Veddas. Some call her Indigollae Kiriamma; others Kahahapola Kiriamma; but both names referred to the same person, they said."

At Unnuwatura Bubula, where there is a small settlement of Veddas, we saw Gale Yaka invoked (see *alutyahagama*) in a dance in which the *Nae Yaku* and Rahu Yaku were also invoked. At the same dance a female spirit came, about whom there was some confusion, she may have been one of the *Nae Yakini*, or she may have been the Kiriamma who was certainly known. Unfortunately the Kapurale who performed this dance became ill after it and so was unable to discuss the matter with us. Certainly Gale Yaka, Indigollae Yaka and Kande Yaka were all known by name, but there seemed much confusion between them all, perhaps Gale Yaka had become lord of the dead and so usurped the place of Kande Yaka, as he was invoked before the *Nae Yaku* in the same ceremony. Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked at a separate dance (see p. 229, *kohombakma*). No hint was given us that Gale Yaka and Indigollae Yaka might be names for the same spirit, but of course this may have been so. The information that Indigollae Yaka was extremely powerful both for good and evil and for successful hunting, was volunteered, and some especially valuable beads were kept to offer him.

At Sinda Wannaya we heard of Indigollae Yaka. The invocation given in Chapter X (No. XXIII) clearly shows that he is of foreign origin, and we were told that Riri Yaka was another name for the same spirit. Now Riri Yaka is the Sinhalese and Tamil blood-devil, a demon with particularly well marked characteristics and considered extremely dangerous. There is thus no doubt that at Indigollaewa the "God of Indigollaewa" is the Gale Deviyo, and he retains this character among the village Veddas, but among the wilder Veddas he acquires Vedda characteristics, becomes an attendant on Kande Yaka, and as a foreigner may

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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be confused with other adopted and therefore little known *yaku*.

The position of the Indigollaewa Kiriamma and her relation to the Kiriamma of the Veddas is comparatively simple. Among the wilder Veddas there are certain female spirits, the *yaku* of old women called *kiriamma* (lit. grandmothers) who were especially fond of children, and would occasionally steal them. They sometimes caused sickness. Most of these live on rocks, and at Sitala Wanniya we were told that the Maha Kiriamma was the chief of these and the *Maha Yakini* were her attendants. All these *yakino* were said to be the wives of Veddas who lived long ago and in no case was the Kiriamma ever mentioned as the wife of the Gale Yaka or of Indigollae Yaka. At Unuwatura Bubula a Gale Yakini was mentioned, and this may have been the female spirit who was invoked after Gale Yaka, and in that case it seems reasonable to suppose that she was the original Maha Kiriamma or Maha Yakini of the Veddas, who has become confused with the foreign Kiriamma (identified by Mr Parker with Mohini in Ceylon), the wife of the foreign Gale Deviyo, who probably was introduced through the Sinhalese to the village Veddas at a very early date[1].

Although she does not appear to have passed from the village Veddas to the wilder Veddas, her consort has been carried on as Indigollae Yaka. Further, although when investigating the beliefs of the less sophisticated Veddas we knew nothing of the foreign Gale Yaka and the Indigollae Kiriamma, we feel confident, from much information volunteered to us, that Indigollae Yaka was an attendant spirit, and there was no connection in the minds of the Veddas between him and their own *kiriamma* who were the wives of long dead Veddas.

Even among the Sinhalese the relationship between the Gale Deviyo and the Maha Kiriamma varies in a manner that suggests that the connection between the two is late. Mr Parker writes, "The Kandians of the North West Province know of no wife of the God of the Rock, and I believe that they alone have preserved the correct tradition in this respect... for it is everywhere

[1] Reference is made on p. 188 to Mr Parker's view that Gale Deviyo is the original supreme god of the Veddas.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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agreed that when the Gale Yaka came to Ceylon he was accompanied only by Kuruvabuda. No doubt she had been taken over from the Tamils, through the Sinhalese of the North Central Province, to provide a suitable wife for the Gale Yaka. Probably she is the one called the Alut Devi, the New Goddess."

There is another matter to which we may refer, namely, a suggested relationship of Kande Yaka to Kanda Swami the Kataragam God. This is a matter to which we paid much attention in the field. The circumstances which at first suggest the identity appear to be the similarity in name, and the fact that "Kandaswami's brother.... an important deity in the Hindu temples is commonly called Pillaiar or 'the child.'" Further, it has been suggested that because "Kandaswami's favourite weapon is the *vel* or lance," therefore it is "most probably the original of the" ceremonial arrow "which plays so large a part in Vedda ceremonies." The passages between quotation marks are by Mr P. Arunachalam and are quoted because he has put the case for the identity of Kande Yaka and the Kataragam God more strongly than anyone else[1].

Remembering that the Veddas are bowmen and that until a few generations ago all genuine Veddas were dependent for their livelihood on the bow, the last argument seems to us of little force.

We have already (in Chapter VII) made mention of the celebrated temple at Kataragam and of the extent of its influence among the Veddas[2]. At Bandaraduwa and other places where the temple at Kataragam is known by repute, and at Henebedda in the Nilgala district, the god is called the "Kataragam God" and not Kanda Swami (*swami* "lord"). At these places Kande

[1] We quote from the report in *The Ceylon Observer* (May 26th, 1908) of Mr Arunachalam's remarks in a discussion on a paper read by one of us before the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.

[2] Cf. Bailey (*op. cit.* pp. 304—305). "The far-famed Hindu Temple of Kataragam which attracts thousands of pilgrims annually from India and is regarded with awe by the Sinhalese is dedicated to Skanda.... of the existence of Skanda or of Kataragam the Veddas are profoundly ignorant.". Bailey spoke of the Nilgala Veddas who at the time he wrote must have been in much the same condition as the Sinala Wanniya community is to-day.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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Yaka is also known, he is always looked upon as a Vedda hero famous for his prowess in killing sambur, he is regarded as a powerful but benevolent spirit who never causes sickness, and who, when invoked and given certain offerings of food, grants luck in hunting. The Kataragam God on the other hand is everywhere held in awe, and acknowledged to be the most fearful of all gods.

Although we do not consider Kande Yaka and Skanda identical we are inclined to agree with Mr Parker that "the two may have been confounded by the Gangetic settlers, Skanda being also known as Kanda Kumara, and being a Hill-god." Any such confusion would be bound to react on the beliefs of the village Veddas or of those communities which later gave rise to the village Veddas. Mr Parker continues, "In *Ancient Ceylon* I have pointed out that Kataragama was an important station in the third century B.C., and suggested that the first settlers who landed near Kirinde... may have concluded from the similarity of names that he and Skanda were the same deity."

Since the above was written Mr Parker has been so good as to send us for perusal a part of the proof sheets of his work *Ancient Ceylon*. We may perhaps be allowed to comment on his main thesis that the Gale Yaka or Gale Deviyo is the god of the earliest inhabitants of Ceylon, and therefore of the Veddas.

In the first place Mr Parker's information concerning the Gale Deviyo was obtained from village Veddas, and the Tamil-speaking Veddas whom we call coast Veddas. He also states that the cult of this God is widely spread among Sinhalese villagers of the North Central and North Western Provinces.

We have noted that we found no trace of the Gale Yaka among the wilder Veddas, although allowed to participate in their ceremonies. However, we heard of Indigollae Yaka as an attendant on Kande Yaka, and although it may be that among the peasant Sinhalese and village Veddas these names are synonymous, this is certainly not the case among the less sophisticated Veddas. Again, Mr Parker states that the emblem of the God is the *Ran-kaetta* the "Golden Bill-hook" (*Ancient Ceylon*, p. 189). This cannot be regarded as a Vedda emblem, for the bill-hook is unknown to the Veddas, who are essentially

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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bowmen, and among whom the arrow in its ordinary or ceremonial form is associated with the invocation of their dead and the other *yaku* whom they worship.

It therefore seems reasonable to suppose that the Gale Yaka is an immigrant god introduced by the Sinhalese to the village Veddas. The fact that politically organized Veddas are mentioned in the Mahavansa as possessing a temple dedicated to the Vyādha Dēva[1]—the Vedda God—in the great city of Anuradhapura in the fourth century B.C. does not seem to us to bear upon the condition of the wilder Veddas, nor do we follow Mr Parker's identification of this God with the Gale Yaka. All the facts adduced by Mr Parker seem to us to be most readily explained by the interaction of Sinhalese and village Veddas as indicated in Chapter I.

[1] Mahavansa, Chapter X, p. 43 (Tournour's translation).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 787 We were told at Bandaraduwa that if men had no luck in hunting they might thrust an arrow into the ground, decorate it with leaves of the *na* tree (*Mesua ferruginea*) or the *wille*, and dance round it. If a shaman were present, which was not necessary, he would naturally take part in this, and any number might participate. This dance was performed at our request, the shaman and a Vedda called Tambia taking part in it. Two clusters of *na* leaves were tied to an arrow, one just below the feathers and another immediately above the blade. This was struck in the ground (Plate XXVII, fig. 1) and the dancers slowly moved round it singing an invocation (No. XV). Soon they both became possessed, the shaman falling into the arms of his supporter (Plate XXVII, fig. 2), almost immediately after which he came to one of the onlookers and promised him a sambar deer if he would hunt in a westerly direction early the next morning. Several times during the dance the performers touched the leaves tied to the upper part of the arrow, and bending low gathered them up to their faces (as in Plate XXVIII, fig. 1), while their hair mingled with the leaves. The shaman afterwards explained that the *yaka* first came to the arrow and the leaves tied to it, and then entered the persons of the dancers who became possessed. Before the *yaka* left the dancers bent low over the arrow shaking their heads violently, and after the dance both men salaamed to the arrow.

376 The *yaka* invoked in this dance was sometimes called Itale Yaka (Arrow Yaka), and though identical with Kande Yaka, there was nevertheless a tendency to think of Itale Yaka as a separate spirit, who was not so generally well disposed as Kande Yaka. We discovered this by the shaman refusing to sing the invocation into the phonograph when we were surrounded by children, lest his attention being attracted, the *yaka* should come, which might be dangerous to the little ones. It must be remembered that the Bandaraduwa community had been much exposed to foreign influence, so that there is nothing surprising in their *yaka* having to a certain extent assumed the dangerous complexion of Sinhalese and Tamil demons.

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535 Although the arrow dance originally had, and still has, a religious significance, since it is danced to procure game and as

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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to his assistance when he began to quiver and sway, then moved and put both arms round one of the dead man's brothers as a sign of kindness from the deceased. (Plate XXXIX, fig. 2.) The brothers said: "It was good of you to come. See we have given you food, now do not come back again," and the *yaka* agreed. The shaman then took the *aude* and transfixed a betel leaf with each and danced and again showed favour to the relatives by giving them each another betel leaf, after which one of the relatives danced, but the shaman threatened to stab with the *aude* the men who were not relatives of the dead man. (Plate XL, fig. 1.) Soon both the shaman and the two brothers fell back and the Yaka departed from them. When the shaman revived, he bent his head over the *kirihoraks* as a sign of respect; then holding both hands over the rice pot he repeated a silent charm, asking any of the other *yaku* who might have come to the ceremony to depart peacefully. After this he fed each relative of the dead man, holding the *kirihoraks* to their mouths, as is shown in Plate XL, fig. 2.

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The Invocation of Bambura Yaka.

The Veddas invoke Bambura Yaka for help in getting pig and yams, both staple foods, the latter being an extremely important element in their diet. The dance is pantomimic, and depicts a boar hunt in which Bambura, the boar-hunting hero, was aided by a Vedda woman, who killed the pig with an arrow she shot from her husband's bow and whose spirit is therefore called Dunne Yakini (Bow Spirit), while the spirit of this woman's husband who turned the boar with his yam stick (*ule*) has become Ule Yaka, that is (Yam-stick Spirit). This ceremony, though not so widely spread, is as dramatic as that in which Kande Yaka stalks and kills sambar deer. We saw it danced by Kaira of Sitala Wanniya and by Wannaku of Uaiche.

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The invocation of Bambura Yaka at Sitala Wanniya. The dance at Sitala Wanniya will be described first, since the story was told us here in its more complete form. Once long ago many Vedda men and women went out in search of yams,

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1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and they took their dogs with them. While all were busy digging yams, the dogs strayed in the jungle and soon put up a boar, to which they gave chase, giving tongue. The men hearing the dogs followed them and soon came up with the boar at bay, which immediately charged them. None of the men could kill the boar, but a woman, whose spirit afterwards became Dunne Yakini, picked up a bow and arrow and killed the boar with the help of her husband Ule Yaka and his brother, who became Kuda Ule Yaka, i.e. Little Yam-stick Yaka. Although Bambura Yaka takes no part in the story as it was told us, he is the important *yaka* of the ceremony; it is he who is especially invoked, Dunne Yakini, her husband and brother-in-law coming in as his attendants, as do a varying number of other *yaku*, presumably the spirits of those who joined in the boar hunt[1].

During the dance Bambura Yaka and all his attendants were present, so that it was not at all clear which part of the dance represented the actions of Bambura Yaka himself, since after the first complete possession *yaku* entered and departed from the shaman without any obvious signs. But we were told after the dance that Bambura was returning to his cave at Lewangala carrying yams and a couple of the large monitor lizards when he came across the hunt.

The properties for this dance are rather complicated and were carefully prepared on the dancing ground, all the men helping in the work and charms being sung the while. The necessary sticks were cut and two flat reddish stones found by a stream were placed below the *maesa* which was built with a double platform, a bundle of grass, leaves and twigs bound together to represent the boar being suspended from the lower platform. The stones were called Kuda Lewangala and Maha Lewangala respectively, and represented the red rocks or rocky hills of Lewangala, the unknown land in which Bambura lived and which is still the chief abiding place of his *yaku*. The majority of these properties are well seen in Plate XLIV, fig. 1.

[1] We may here refer to a matter we discuss at greater length in Chapter X. It is certain that the invocations (Nos. XXVII and XXVIII) used at the Bambura Yaka ceremony and specially addressed to Bambura, which were only partially understood by those who sang them, originally applied to honey collecting.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

843 we provided the rice and coconut necessary for the ceremony.
796 This food is always eaten by the community after the *yaku* have inspected it.

The *yaku* invoked to ensure safety during pregnancy and
843 childbirth are three in number and are called Pata (bark) Yaku.
796 No story could be discovered concerning them, nor could any
796 reason be elicited for the name Pata (bark) or the large quantity of bast which is used in the dance. This can be taken from any tree in the jungle, and is torn into strips about half-an-inch broad. It may, however, be suggested that these particular *yaku* require the *inner* bark of trees as a resting-place just as the *yaku* invoked to come to the *kolomaduwa* or *alutyakagama* come first to the leaves used in making these structures, and then may or may not enter the person of the shaman, while they may take refuge again in the leaves after they leave the shaman. In the instances cited the leafy structures were beaten with sticks after the ceremony to drive the *yaku* away; this ritual was not observed in the Pata Yaku ceremony, but it must be remembered that only three *yaku* were invoked and the shaman may have been thoroughly satisfied that they had gone away from the place, while, on the other hand, in the two other ceremonies we were told that hosts of attendant *yaku* rested amid the leaves, and that the more important spirits alone entered the persons of the dancers.

The properties used in the Pata Yaku ceremony held for
843 Mari at Sitala Wanniya were as follows: three stout posts,
796 which were thrust into the ground in a line; the tallest was about 2 ft 6 in. high and the shortest somewhat less than 2 ft, the upper ends of all being forked and large quantities of strips of bast lashed to them. These bast covered stakes are called
[293] the *usmukaliya*, *medamukaliya* and *balakanna*, i.e. the high, middle and young post respectively, and each one belongs to one of the Pata Yaku. The *wilakodiya* or *kude* (umbrella), which belongs to all the Pata Yaku, is a similar bunch of bast strips tied to a rather longer stick which is not driven into the ground. The *amamula* is a stout stick about 18 inches long, to which bunches of bast are tied at each end and doubled back so as to present somewhat the appearance of a dumbbell. All these

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX8 Vedda AX8

The Dola Yaka Ceremony.

222 437 Collecting honey is almost as important to the Vedda as hunting, for not only is honey valuable as food but it is one of the most important articles of barter, and every year at the end of the honey season the Moorman pedlar[1] penetrates into the wildest parts of the jungle with iron, cloth, pots and beads to exchange for the highly prized jungle honey.

222 796 796 Nor is honey collecting without risk, for the "Little People of the Rocks" can be very angry, and their sting is deadly. Hence the Veddas ask for success in honey collecting from their natural protectors the *yaku*, and Dola Yaka is especially invoked for this purpose. Although there is no tradition concerning his actions or his dwelling place his aid is invoked for success in collecting *bambara* honey from trees, and for the more dangerous task of cutting the combs from the craggy hill tops and rock faces in which the colonies of the rock bee make their homes. The successful invocation of Dola Yaka can only take place in the early afternoon at the time when the bees are most active in visiting flowers.

796 778 A *maesa* with a single platform about 4 ft 6 in. from the ground was built, and two arrows were fixed in the centre of the space cleared for the dance (Plate XLVII). A betel leaf was placed on the top of each and pressed down on the shaft so that it rested on the feathers, and a small bead necklace was looped over the head of each arrow and rested on the betel leaf. These leaves were said to represent the large bundles of leaves which the Veddas use to smoke the bees from the comb, and the necklaces represent the creeper by which the twigs would be tied together and by which it would be lowered over the cliff edge. It was noted that one arrow was taller than the other, and we were told that the taller arrow was the one which would be used in cutting the comb, and that when the honey was taken it would be thrust through the withy binding the bundle of leaves used

[1] The term Moorman is applied to the numerous Mohammedans who make their living as shopkeepers and pedlars. Many of them are proud of their alleged Arabic descent, but it is only in a minority that skin colour or features suggest Arab blood, and the appearance of the majority of Moormen scarcely differs from that of the Tamils of the East Coast, among whom their most considerable settlements are found.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann 2-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AK5 Vedda AK5

796 535 rushed to the opposite side of the dancing ground to get away from the angry bees. After repeating this pantomime, Nila, with much gasping and shaking of the arrows, promised *hunulara* combs to Handuna, wherever he went. More dancing round the arrows followed and another mock smoking was performed, after which the three men fled from the *massa* brushing the bees away and even feigning to pick some off their bodies. Then they returned to the arrows round which they danced until they all fell back and Dola Yaka departed from them.

Handuna explained to us that in dancing to Dola Yaka it was usual to hold a cloth over the head, and that Dola Yaka had remarked on the absence of cloths and warned the dancers that evil might befall them if they were to slip and fall with their heads uncovered. So two pieces of white cloth were provided for Handuna and Vela, who put on *kaugala* and repeated the dance. The ceremony was identical with that already described except in two respects; in the first part of the dance Handuna and Vela held their cloths in their outstretched arms, frequently putting them over their heads and always doing so when listening for the hum of the bees, and when they prophesied to their fellows each held his cloth so as to cover both the man to whom he spoke and himself. Both men, however, put down their cloths just before the end of the dance and, pulling the arrows out of the ground, went through the pantomime of cutting the combs from below the *massa* with them.

The Invocation of the Rahu Yaku.

796 796 Sitala Wanniya was the only place at which we saw this ceremony, though the Rahu Yaku were also invoked at the *ahatpahagama* ceremony at Unuwatura Bubula. At Sitala Wanniya the Rahu Yaku are called upon to cure sickness and to give good luck in collecting honey from trees. It seemed that they were not invoked to grant protection or good fortune when rock-honey was sought, this being the function of Dola Yaka. The offerings necessary to propitiate them are coconuts and rice, and each dancer must wear a piece of white cloth and cross shoulder straps of bark.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The story relates that there was once three brothers, and one day the youngest was very angry and quarrelled with his wife. He left her in his cave and went out hunting, and when he returned he found a strange man in the cave with his wife. The stranger escaped so quickly that the angry husband could not shoot him; but he then beat his wife, and though he did not kill her he jumped into the fire and was burnt to death and became Gini Rahu Bandar or Yaka. When they died his two brothers became Rahu Yaku also.

A post was placed in the centre of the cleared dancing space, the upper end was split and bound so as to form the support for a pot containing coconut milk, a few areca nuts and betel leaves. This was called the *wilkoraha* (lake pot), for once in the old days water was required to make the coconut milk for an offering to the Rahu Yaku, and as there was no stream near by it had to be fetched from a lake; hence the name *wilkoraha*. A *maesa* (well seen in Plate LXVIII, fig. 1) about 4 ft 6 in. high was built of sticks at one side of the dancing ground, and two pots of cooked rice and coconut milk were put on it as an offering to the *yaku*. A piece of bark to represent a necklace was put on the *wilkoraha*; it was not known why it was necessary to offer a necklace to the Rahu Yaku, but it was always done[1]. Wooden *kaduwa* (swords) were used when invoking Rahu Yaku; these were two flattened sticks about 18 ins. long decorated with bands of red and yellow pigment and with guards made of twigs of fresh green leaves. One of these *kaduwa* without its guard is shown in fig. 11.

The use of the sword (*kaduwa*) and the objects themselves are both curious, for Veddas have never used any weapon but the bow and axe, and Handuna explained that though these were called *kaduwa* they really represented ceremonial arrows

[1] It was quite clear that Vedda men never wore necklaces, but *yaku*, especially dangerous *yaku*, as the Rahu Yaku were declared to be, were sometimes offered necklaces or pieces of bast to represent them. Thus at Unuwatura Bu'gala, Indigolla Yaka was considered especially dangerous, and the shaman kept a particular string of old and highly valued beads and used it only when making invocations to this *yaku*. These and other instances strengthen the idea expressed in Chapter VIII that beads are prized among the Veddas for their magical properties, the idea of ornament being quite secondary.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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When later we asked Handuna for the *kadawa* as specimens, the request was not granted until something was given in exchange to the Rahu Yaku, as Handuna said they might cause trouble if their property were taken from them.

WANAGATA YAKU.

The story of the Wanagata Yaku was that once a family became imprisoned in their rock-shelter by the fall of rock which blocked the entrance to the cave, so that the whole family died and their spirits became Wanagata Yaku, who are now invoked for help in hunting. In spite of this the ceremonial with which these *yaku* are invoked did not appear to have any reference to the story.

A sapling rather more than six feet high with its head and branches was stripped of its bark and thrust into the ground in the centre of the space cleared for dancing; its upper end had been split previously so as to form a support for small objects, and long strands of bast were tied to it. A handkerchief was thrown over the top and pressed down between the split ends, and some betel leaves were placed on this.

The shaman wearing a *hangala* danced slowly round the post with a handkerchief in his hand, while the invocation was sung. The handkerchief was soon exchanged for an *aude*, and it was noted that this was not the same one that had been used when invoking Kande Yaka in a previous dance. In order to avoid putting the handkerchief on the ground the shaman tied it round his shoulder. Then taking some betel leaves he danced with these and the *aude* in his hands, then transfixing the betel leaves on the point of the *aude* he raised them to his head, thus offering them to the Wanagata Yaku (Plate XLIX, fig. 1). Soon he became possessed and bent his head, shaking his hair over his face as he clung to the post with one hand while his whole body quivered and shook. With a shout he seized two *aude*, and holding one in each hand came to one of us (C. G. S.) and holding both *aude* over his shoulders said, as he quivered and shifted from one foot to the other, "You have called us, what do you want?" He returned to the post, when a rice

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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346 springing from the upper end of this limb had been removed with the exception of three which were left to support between them a rough earthenware pot. The remains of a *kudaveva* also existed somewhat to the south-east of the doorway about the spot marked *X* on the plan. The post supporting the weight of that portion of the roof extending beyond the door had tied round it a fringe of dried shredded coconut leaves. Within the temple stood a *kudaveva* (marked *K*) behind which in one corner of the temple was a model of a sailing boat about two feet long partly square-rigged and clearly meant to imitate a European ship. The temple was for the worship of Kapalpei, Ammal and

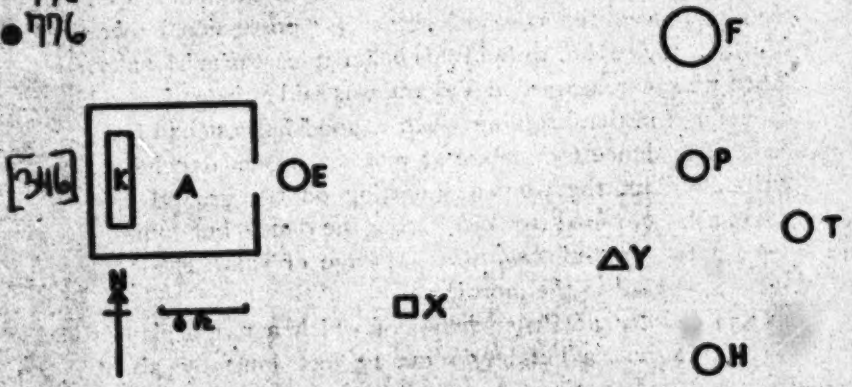

Fig. 14. Plan of Vedda temple and its surroundings.

Komara Devam. The name Kapalpei means ship-demon. We could only discover that he is regarded as the most powerful of the beings worshipped and that he is a foreigner who reached the country in a ship. Ammal is a Tamil Goddess who sends smallpox and skin disease[1].

We could at the time discover nothing concerning Komara Devam, though doubtless he is the same as Kumara Deva, an immigrant deity, whose characteristic weapon is a silver sword, who was one of the chief spirits invoked to remove sickness by

[1] Mr A. Ber Kumarakulasingha tells me that there are temples to this Goddess at Jaffna, but that there are none in Batticaloa though possibly there may be some in the neighbourhood.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the inhabitants of Gongolla a primitive jungle village some 20 miles from the coast in the Eastern Province[1].

When the dance, of which we saw a partial rehearsal, is about to take place the inside of the temple is decorated with cloths and the green branches of trees including coconut leaves, and the model of the boat which commemorates the arrival of Kapalpei is hoisted to the top of the tall pole standing outside the temple. If the dance is undertaken in order to cure a sick man, milk is placed in the pot which is supported on the rough stand (fig. *Y*) mentioned above. The sick individual, and probably the dancers, are fed from this and at the end of the night's dance the last portion is thrown out into the jungle for Kapalpe.

The dancers should wear a petticoat made of strips of coconut leaves and green leafy twigs of other trees, and it was stated that the ministrant wore these just as did the other dancers. After the dance a number of these ceremonial garments are preserved in the temple where they are allowed to dry. Rice, plantain and chewing material are piled on the *kudaram* during the ceremony and camphor is burnt. Kapalpe sees the food provided and the honour done him and is propitiated.

The stone *pilliyar* has been frankly adopted from the Tamils though Mr Kumarakulasinghe pointed out that no sacred Tamil stone was so rough[2]; further, according to the same informant Tamils do not dance round either *pilliyar* or *kudaram*.

At Kalkudah it was said that there was a special "priest" or ministrant whom we did not see. We gathered that in some way he officiated in connection with the land cultivated by the community and he perhaps corresponded to the Sinhalese *gamarale*.

Some idea of the actual character of the ceremony and of the nature of the *kudaram* and pole can be derived from the dance rehearsed for our benefit at Vakarai. Plate LXX, fig. 1

[1] Cf. Brenda Z. Seligmann, "A Devil Ceremony of the Peasant Sinhalese," *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.* Vol. XXXIX, 1909.

[2] This may be true of the Tamils of the east coast, but we have seen some shrines containing equally rough stones set up by Tamil coolies on plantations. Worship may be performed at such shrines, offerings of rice and chewing materials being made at them and afterwards eaten.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

us in danger, sickness etc.' When we enquired whether their dead lived on as spirits he replied, they did not consider whether the departed were living or dead, they were just spirits, in Tamil *saami* or *deivi*, in Sinhalese *yaku*; all spirits were alike, neither good nor bad. Another coast Vedda named Patiniya told us that their religion was that of the Tamils. In memory of their dead, whom they called *yaku*, they cooked rice and ate it; they invoked the *yaku* in sickness, etc.[1]"

Just as Kapalpei sent sickness, so death was also attributed to him, but perhaps not epidemics, for it appeared to be generally considered that a single death would satisfy him for the time, so that it would be days or weeks before he would be expected to send sickness or death again.

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 498.

2; Bailey G-5 (ca, 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 If they have even any language. "Some," he says, "are so degraded that it has appeared doubtful whether they possess any language whatever; and not only is their dialect incomprehensible to a Singhalese, but even their communications with each other are made by signs, grimaces, and guttural sounds, which bear little or no resemblance to distinct words or systematized language."* I can only say that I have been repeatedly among the very wildest of the race—indeed the "wretched outcasts," here so summarily deprived of the power of speech, are those whom I have been endeavouring to describe, and I never knew one of them at a loss for words sufficiently intelligible to convey his meaning, not to his fellows only, but to the Singhalese of the neighbourhood, who are all, more or less, acquainted with the Veddah patois.

775 [681] The Veddahs have no idea of a future state of rewards and punishments; for the vague vestige of a belief in retributive justice, which I have before mentioned, cannot be said to show any faith in the punishment by a Superior Power of sinners in this world.

114 It has been most truly said that it is a matter of almost insuperable difficulty to arrive at a proper understanding of the creed of barbarous tribes through the medium of direct questioning, and that nothing can be more vague than all their statements on this most important subject.†

771 It is not to be wondered at that a people so barbarous as the Veddahs are—without literature of any kind—who have lived in the depth of the forests in almost complete seclusion for centuries on centuries, should be incapable themselves of giving any definite or intelligent account of what they do believe. They are unable to express in language their ideas on subjects, which, even in their own minds, have never assumed any distinct form; and though they are ready enough to answer the questions put to them, it is no easy task so to frame them as to make their object intelligible to such rude and unlettered savages. The result 776 of the most patient inquiry is, that the Veddahs have a vague belief in a host of undefined spirits, whose influence is rather for good than for evil. Still, vague as this belief is, not even the

* Tennent, vol. ii, pt. ix, c. iii, p. 441, 2nd ed. This is stated on the authority of "a gentleman who resided long in their vicinity, G. R. Mercer, Esq., of the Civil Service, who held office at Badulla." Those who remember that gentleman's love of a practical joke, will smile at seeing this "joke" gravely recorded in the *Physical, Historical, and Topographical Account of the Island of Ceylon*, by Sir J. Emerson Tennent, K.C.S., LL.D., etc.; and my able predecessor, Mr. Mercer, must have been as much amused at seeing it there, as any one else.

† See Hodgson's "Brief Note on Indian Ethnology," Bengal Asiatic Society's *Journal*, March 1849.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

wildest Veddahs are without an "instinct of worship." They believe that the air is peopled by spirits, that every rock and every tree, every forest and every hill, in short every feature of nature, has its *genius loci*; but these seem little else than mere nameless phantoms, whom they regard rather with mysterious awe than actual dread.

Such appears to be the form which the superstitions of every savage tribe naturally assume,—the necessity for a belief in something more than human, imparting to the commonest objects a supernatural character. But besides this vague spirit-worship, they have a more definite superstition, in which there is more of system. This is the belief in the guardianship of the spirits of the dead. Every near relative becomes a spirit after death, who watches over the welfare of those who are left behind. These, which include their ancestors and their children, they term their "nâhya yakoon," kindred spirits. They describe them as "ever watchful, coming to them in sickness, visiting them in dreams, giving them flesh when hunting." In short in every calamity, in every want they call on them for aid; and it is curious that the shades of their departed children, "bilindoo yakkoon," or infant spirits, as they call them, are those which they appear most frequently to invoke.*

It is a pretty belief, and contrasts favourably with the superstitions of the Kandyans, who have spirits enough in their system, but almost all thoroughly malignant, and needing constant propitiation. But the Veddah spirit-world is singularly free from evil. I can find only one *absolutely* malignant spirit in it whom they really fear;† though, like all savages, they have an undefined awe of the nameless spirits whom they believe to haunt the darkness. The shades of their ancestors and of their children seem to be purely benevolent. The ceremonies with which they invoke them are few as they are simple. The most common is the following. An arrow is fixed upright in the ground, and the Veddah dances slowly round it, chanting this invocation, which is almost musical in its rhythm.

"Mâ miya, mâ miy, mâ deyâ'
Topang koyihatti mittigan yandâ'h!"

* They also speak of them as "witera yakkoon," "child-spirits." They seem to prefer their great-grandmother (maha kiri amma) to the rest of their deceased ancestors; but I cannot ascertain any cause for their preference for the old lady. I may, however, be wrong in describing it as a preference. It may be the reverse, for she is invoked chiefly in cases of sickness, when the patient is supposed to be suffering from the malignity of a spirit.

† Awtramada Yakka, who especially injures women, lying wait for them in the forest.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

"My departed one, my departed one, my God!
Where art thou wandering!"*

The spirit of the dead is here simply called upon, without even the object for which it is invoked being mentioned. And this invocation appears to be used on all occasions when the intervention of the guardian spirits is required, in sickness, preparatory to hunting, etc.†

Sometimes, in the latter case, a portion of the flesh of the game is promised as a votive offering, in the event of the chase being successful; and they believe that the spirits will appear to them in dreams and tell them where to hunt.

Sometimes they cook food and place it in the dry bed of a river, or some other secluded spot, and then call on their deceased ancestors by name. "Come, and partake of this! Give us maintenance as you did when living! Come, wheresoever you may be; on a tree, on a rock, in the forest, come!" And they dance round the food, half chanting, half shouting, the invocation.‡

They have no knowledge of a Supreme Being. "Is he on a rock? On a white ant-hill? On a tree? I never saw a God!" was the only reply I received to repeated questions.§ They have

* I find in my notes another version of this invocation, which slightly alters the first words. It runs thus: "Mā mini, mā mini!—my gem, my gem!" but "miya," which signifies "dead," is the most common. The word in the invocation translated "God" is evidently a corruption of the Sanskrit deva, a god or divinity. EDIT.]

† And they are invoked without any ceremony at all—by a mere mental ejaculation. I once saw a Veddah make a bad shot, and he threw down his bow with a gesture of impatience, saying—"That was because I did not call on my Dillisdoo Yakkoon." And before making his next shot, he muttered an invocation.

‡ A superstition similar somewhat to this is prevalent among the neighbouring Singhalese. If a man die who has lived a good life, his relatives give alms to the poor, calling on the dead by name to look down on them, and enable them to follow his good example. If he has lived an evil life, alms are also given; but these are propitiatory offerings for his sins, and to avert his evil influence from his survivors. For, in this case, he has become an evil spirit, apt to injure his own family and their cattle unless civilly treated. The degree of malignity depends on the degree of evil in the life led by deceased. If he dies with a hankering after worldly things, he haunts the house in which he lived in a variety of forms—perhaps most commonly that of a toad or a cobra, probably because these frequent houses. It is also, in some parts, a common belief that if a man die, and shortly after one of the family fall sick, and is not cured by the usual medicines and ceremonies, the sickness is attributed to the spirit of the dead, who must be propitiated by a mess of rice, left in the house for him. This, generally, is supposed to effect a cure.

§ It is curious that in one of their invocations, "mā Devā", my God! occurs, see before; and that of thunder they say, "a spirit, or a god has cried out".

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

no idols, offer no sacrifices, and pour no libations. They cannot be said to have any temples, for the few sticks sometimes erected, with a branch thrown over them, are, I imagine, simply to protect their votive offerings. 782 796 [346]

They have no system of medicine, though they will accept medicine when given. In cases of sickness they sprinkle water on the patient, invoking their deceased ancestors to heal him. Sometimes they simply utter the name of spirits as they dance round the sick man. Sometimes a garland of flowers is offered to the spirit who has afflicted him.* They believe in the efficacy of what are called devil dances, but are ignorant of the art of a Kattadia, or devil dancer. I can find no trace of metempsychosis, so universal amongst Buddhists. 755 769 [775]

I have now described what is the *actual* religious belief, if it can be so called, of the Veddahs; and it was only by dint of often repeated visits among them, and very careful inquiry, that I succeeded in obtaining the particulars I have recorded. 771 774

But, that at some period of their history they had some knowledge of a more "systematized" faith, their charms and invocations, some of their customs, and the very names they bear, seem conclusively to prove.

Such testimony is invaluable. For neither the inquirer, whose zeal may induce him to jump too hastily at conclusions, nor the people themselves, can distort it, or give it a strained interpretation. But this evidence all points to something long past, to a faith once, at least, familiar to them, but now forgotten. At the least, it indicates a former contact with civilization, and proves that they have a history more full of incident than would belong to a race which was always as barbarous as it is now.†

In their charms the sun and moon are frequently invoked, although in their daily life neither luminary is respected.‡ [821]

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* They invoke the Gal-Yakko, spirit of the rock; Welde-Yakko, spirit of the chase; Oonapána-Yakko, of whom I have no knowledge; and the shade of their great-grandmother. They also propitiate "Maha-Yakkhini", who appears rather an evil personage. It is to her that they offer a garland of flowers. They describe her as a "foreigner", and say that they know nothing about her, but acquired their awe of her from the Singhalese. The Weddi-Yakko is known to the Singhalese; hunters offer flowers, blood, and burnt meat to this spirit, before hunting, to secure their success. Oonapána-Yakko is known to the Singhalese of the Weddiratas, but I do not think he is generally known to the Singhalese.

† Vide Tennent's account of the Veddahs, especially vol. ii, part iii, chap. ix, p. 441-2. "They have no knowledge of a God, nor of a future state, no temples, no altars, prayers, or charms; in short, no 'instinct of worship' except, it is reported, some ceremonies analogous to devil worship."

‡ This occurs in several charms. The following (which, though not known to the Singhalese, as applied to *wild boars*, is identical with one known to them to drive away toothache), not only invokes the sun and moon, 789

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

written from memory aided by not very adequate notes made shortly after the ceremony, helps to fill up a lacuna in the hitherto published records of Vedda customs and ritual. 121 796

In June of 1925 I was engaged, as a junior administrative officer, in dealing with an outbreak of cholera among the Muslim tobacco cultivators in the neighbourhood of a remote coast Vedda village, about forty-four miles north of Batticaloa on the Batticaloa-Trincomalee coast road. Investigation by the medical officer with whom I was associated soon revealed the fact that the focus of the infection was a yet more remote inland district lying behind that part of the coast, and that to grapple effectively with the disease it would be necessary to evacuate the population of that area and to concentrate it, for the treatment of the actually sick and for the segregation of the " contacts," in the comparatively accessible locality where we had already established ourselves, not far from the spot where the first cases to be brought to our notice had occurred. I therefore found myself obliged, at short notice, to enlarge the camp of which I had already begun the construction, and in particular to begin the building of a new hospital hut on a more grandiose scale than that originally contemplated. For the work of construction, which consisted of the erection of a framework of jungle sticks and the covering of it with *cadjans*,—dried and plaited palm branches,—according to the familiar village method, it was necessary to enlist the services of the coast Veddas of the adjoining settlement. The villagers were naturally reluctant to engage in work which they not unreasonably supposed would expose them to the infection, and it called for much tact and persuasiveness on the part of the Chief Headman of the *pattu* to get them to do so. Fully realizing that, apart from all other considerations, the occurrence of even one case of cholera among them would effectively put a stop to all co-operation, the Chief Headman and I took, successfully as the event showed, every possible precaution to prevent such a catastrophe. Everything seemed to be going on without let or hindrance when the Chief Headman upset my calculations by announcing that the work must cease for twelve hours on the 8th of June, to enable the villagers to perform a ceremony in honour of the *Periya Devi* 123 [131 361] [796 976]

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

(Great Goddess).[8] It was in vain that I pointed out the urgency of the work and protested against any delay, even going the length of suggesting that the ceremony should be postponed. After a good deal of futile argument I was obliged to resign myself to the inevitable.

My chagrin was to some extent lessened when the Chief Headman approached me with an invitation from the people to be present at the ceremony. The invitation was welcome, for it offered an alternative to an evening spent in the company only of a book and of my own thoughts in the solitude of the one-roomed " rest house " where I had my temporary quarters. It was accordingly arranged that the Chief Headman should come to fetch me after my dinner.

The moon,—full two days before,—had already risen when the Chief Headman and his following of village notables emerged from the shadows of the jungle bordering the high road. I got up from the long chair in which I had been sitting on the verandah and joined them, and we set off northwards along the road. After walking along it for about half a mile we turned off to the right through alternate thick jungle and open spaces overgrown with *illuk*-grass, and with here and there a solitary tree casting a deep black shadow under the white light of the moon, in the direction of the mouth of the river which crossed the high road about three and a half miles to the north of our camp. We had gone in this way perhaps a mile in all when I began to be aware of the rhythmical throbbing of a tom-tom, at first only faint in the distance, somewhere ahead in the jungle. I recollect well the feeling of growing excitement as the sound grew gradually louder and more insistent with our advance. Another mile, and the path which our party was following, at that point through thick jungle, took a sharp turn to the right, and we suddenly found ourselves in a large circular clearing, surrounded by high timber. To our right as we entered were the spectators, squatted upon the ground in rows and facing towards that part of the enclosure which lay to our left. Even the fringes of the jungle seemed to be

[8] This goddess is presumably the goddess Ammal, " who sends small-pox and skin disease " : see *The Veddas*, p. 356.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

the other hand, the mortality would be very considerable among the offspring. This mortality, when infantile, would generally be among the first born and last born, owing to maternal immaturity in the first case and constitutional depletion in the last.

On the question of sex I found that the prevalent idea was that if a wife was not thoroughly obedient to her husband she would invariably give birth to females, and it was only complete subjection to the husband's will that could secure a preponderance of males.

I could get no information on the subject of barrenness or sterility.

As regards the religion of the Veddas previous to their modernization, it appears that they believed in certain "Yakko," who exercised certain influences for good or evil. There was no conception of a Supreme Creator. On the other hand, the "Yakko" possessed, in common with humanity, a tendency to favour; so that it was always possible to secure its influence in return for special molifying ceremonies. Thus, by certain incantations, ceremonial offerings, or honorific declarations, the Yakko who exercised specific powers could be induced to subtend influence to the advantage of the individual then desiring it. Thus, the Yakka who guarded the deer might be induced to direct the deer to come within the reach of the Vedda's bow and arrows. On the other hand, another Yakka might be propitiated so as to render the hunter invisible to the leopard, so that the hunter would escape harm.

Special incantations were supposed to render an individual successful in the chase, so that his aim would be deadly, or that more game would come his way.

Again, disease or sickness was the direct outcome of certain malign Yakko, who could be propitiated, and this was specially to be considered when a woman was pregnant, so that the evil might be diverted from the unborn child.

I was not able to discover from my informant if the Veddas, in their primitive times had any definite form of agriculture. It is certain that they were acquainted with rice, but I could not ascertain how it was procured.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Vela was an interesting little chap and, unlike the others, had always something to say for himself. He entertained us with charms, pleasing lullabies, and songs of rock and stream demons that came as fast as *na* leaves shaken by the wind, in the guise of bears, their mouths adrip with human blood. These he sang despite warnings from the others who reminded him that he had sucked a chicken bone, which was a dangerous thing to do before invoking devils lest it invite their anger.

Coming to a pool, brown with decaying leaves, we asked if the water was good. "Very good," said a Vedda, adding the epicurean touch, "Those fallen flowers floating there make the water sweet; they are the flowers that give good honey."

It was high noon when Veddas left us to go in search of food. But Vela lingered to tell us of the oppression of the local headman. Did they but catch a young deer or pea-chick that came their way they were prosecuted. The visiting apothecary too was bad; he gave them no medicines except for gifts of honey or meat; and the poor fellows had little enough for themselves.

Having visited a cave containing the battered remains of an old Buddha, we continued our circuit of the rock; and after a walk of an hour and a half under a burning sky, came to the Veddas of the *Kudda Ulpotha*. These had no huts of any sort, but merely sat grouped in families under various trees. It was the season of the *kong* fruit, of which there was plenty about. Women were boiling down the luscious pulp with which to make cakes, or extracting from the seeds an oil said to be good for sores and wounds. Very fond of the fruit they all were; it had been their only sustenance for days. One little urchin, his mouth be-ringed with parangi ulcers, was licking clean a coconut shell containing the acrid juice, with a relish worthy of a tastier dish.

The patriarch of the settlement, Naida, and his wife were typical Veddas; but here again most of the others showed Tamil admixture. One man had a large scar across his face. The manner he came by it illustrates well the aggressiveness of the little Ceylon sloth-bear. When out collecting honey he saw a she-bear and her cub. Realizing the certain disaster of such an encounter he cautiously climbed a tree; but in doing so snapped a twig and gave himself away. With a series of blood-curdling cries she charged him, and clambering up the tree, bit and clawed him severely. A large flap was torn from his face. This his father sewed up with a thorn and fibre, and doctored with a result that might have done credit to any surgeon. Living as they invariably do in the neighbourhood of rocks, and having kindred tastes in honey, yams, and fruit, the Veddas and bears often encounter each other, as the ugly scars on many of the men testify.

As, footsore and tired, we rounded the southern end of the rock towards evening, we met parties of Veddas returning with basketfuls of *kong* fruit. One youth was up a tree making the jungle ring to his song as he beat down the berries. As it darkened we reached Manampitiya, but not before we had worried a blind old owl that had descended to a streamlet to quench its thirst.

It is hard to forget that first experience of the Veddas in their homes: those voices in the jungle, that sight of their huts among the trees, and of their women roasting dainty little flowers for food.

CHAPTER V

WESTMINSTER ABBEY AND FRIAR'S HOOD

1. WESTMINSTER ABBEY

I know not where the white road runs,
nor what the blue hills are,
But a man can have a sun for friend,
and for his guide a star;
And there's no end of voyaging when once
the voice is heard,
For the river calls and the road calls, and oh!
the call of a bird.

GERALD GOULD

133 FROM some dominant height in the central uplands of Ceylon one can survey, to east and south, a vast sea of hill-studded forest. The scene, when glowing with the hues of evening, might well take its place among the panoramas of the world. In this medley of mountains there is one, a long ridge rising at one end to a square tower, which seldom fails to arrest the fancy. Westminster Abbey it is called by those who view it from afar, Govinda Hela by those with closer acquaintance of it. Well to the north of this is a peak, tall and lonely, known as Friar's Hood —the *Capello de Frade* of the old Portuguese mariners to whom it was a land-mark by which to evade their mortal foes the Dutch, "the rebels from Europe" as their despatches called them. *Omne ignotum pro magnifico est*, says Tacitus; but does near knowledge always rob reality of romance? We shall see.

●776 The inhabitants of Siyambala Anduwa, half way between Muppane and Pottuvil, are a simple folk ingrained with jungle superstition: That river beneath the bridge was haunted by demons; it was not safe to go there alone at night, or to bathe there by noon especially with scented soap, for this attracted devils who showed their displeasure by hammering on the bridge or throwing sand; a small boy digging in the river-bed was swallowed into the earth and rescued only to die of a fever a few days later. Apparitions were seen in the form of dwarfs who shot up to the proportions of trees and suddenly disappeared, striking the beholder with terror. As for children you could not bring up "those things" in these parts. The *gawara* was a buffalo-like beast possessed of a tongue so horny that when it licked man or animal the flesh dissolved away leaving only the bones. The *Nittawo* were a pigmy race, that lived at one time in the Kattragam country of Lenama not far away. These hairy cannibals attacked in companies, driving their long nails into the

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

flesh which they tore out and ate. They were afraid only of the buffalo and the dog. The Veddas, not very long ago, are said to have herded the last of them into a cave and destroyed them. Brute or man, persistent rumour in jungle countries brings the *Nittaewo* within the realm of the probable.

Entering the forest at Siyambala Anduwa, and working north, we strove to maintain a route as far removed as possible from civilisation represented by the coast road on the one hand, and the Badulla-Batticaloa road on the other.

Two miles within the jungle was the old path, now over-grown and abandoned, from Badulla to Pottuvil. It led hereabouts through a narrow pass guarded, it is said, a few generations ago by the Karande Hela Vedda who, having fenced it across, levied toll on travellers. Intercepting, as he did, a trade route from the interior to the coast, we may be certain he made a good thing of it, getting his share both of the *hurrukkan*, maize, vegetables and fruit of the *Vanni*, as well as of the paddy, salt and dry fish of the Coast.

Kandanketiya, nine miles from Siyambala Anduwa, boasts an ancient temple of the era of Dutugemunu. We found it in the keeping of a doddering priest of eighty, who showed us round, all the while muttering "hu-hu, hu-hu," his only form of comment. His bed-room, dark, airless and dirty, was better adapted to mice and spiders than human beings. A great brass spittoon, emptied he told us once in two weeks, was the proudest thing there. A stupendous bo-tree, planted by himself, mocked with its vigour the withered frame of him who had tended it. Throwing open the doors of his little temple, without much ado he bade us enter the holy of holies, and pointed proudly to pictures of *devas* and harpies, half spurred-fowl half woman, who he confidently asserted lived in the Himalayas. Incidentally he indicated a money-box on the altar. But no sooner were our donations secure than his interest in us rapidly declined, reaching its climax when we told him we were going: "All right, go," he said, settling down comfortably on his bed.

A hornbill flying repeatedly to a large tree attracted our attention. Perching itself wood-pecker-wise on the trunk, it fed the occupant of a hole there with berries which it brought out of its crop one by one. We were told this was the male feeding the female he had deprived of feathers and shut up in the hole. We suggested there might be young. "Not so," said a woman; "where then are the feathers and droppings at the root of the tree?" Here was an opportunity to test the truth of gossip we had heard regarding the domestic amenities of hornbills. A man was sent up to the nest. Squeezing his hand through the narrow opening he produced an egg; then seized something by the beak, and unsuccessfully tried to pull it through. With an axe he enlarged the hole and soon handed down to us a veritable travesty of a bird. Scared out of her wits, voiceless, featherless, with half-opened beak, she flapped pathetic wings and tumbled ludicrously about in attempts to escape. She was obviously unfit for existence in the outer world and we returned her to her dark abode. Rumour was right, the male hornbill took no risks.

Bowala village lies at the northern end of Westminster Abbey. Buried as we were in the forest depths, we had not seen the hill since leaving the heights of Haputale. Suddenly the leviathan bulked over the trees. "There, that is why it is called Govinda Hela*," said our guide pointing

*Goa inde hala—rock where the monitor lizard is.

776 CCD 173 172 136 361 [103]

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

sophisticated Vedda knows what is expected of him he will act up to the expectation right enough. Personally I have never yet met a Vedda who could not laugh. The truth is that the Vedda will laugh with the best of us when there is occasion; but he is a stranger to the conventional, hypocritical smile of civilisation, meant only to please and so uncertain an index of the heart. The Vedda's face, like a child's, is a mirror to his mind.

His natural expression is one of apathy and moroseness. Schooled to hardship and privation, he is neither greatly distraught by sorrow nor transported by joy. He expresses his emotions with more moderation than we; he is the greater fatalist; and accepts with stoic equanimity the hard conditions of his life which have wrought into his expression a dour indifference, a decorous gravity.

There is something naturally fierce in his nature; and it does not do to anger him. The tradition is undoubtedly true that the Veddas, at one time, carried in their betel bags fragments of human liver which they chewed when roused, to give fire to their frenzy. And this is probably the origin of the Sinhalese threat, "I'll eat your liver!" There is a spot in the Eastern Province which commemorates to this day an early incident of colonisation: A Vedda had once way-laid and killed a European soldier, and going up to him could hear the ticking of his watch; examining this he said, "His life is still here," and dashed it to pieces on a rock.

When a Vedda returns from an expedition no one must speak to him until he has rested and it has pleased him to talk first. One who had accompanied us once on a hunt nearly killed a Sinhalese boy who innocently asked him what he had brought, the moment he arrived. Most sportsmen, Vedda or not, are impatient of cross-examination when fatigued—especially if unsuccessful.

The Veddas have no conception of a supreme being; nor have they any myth or theory bearing on cosmogony. The panorama of the heavens is beyond their questioning; but its supremacy is instinctively avowed: "*Mā Suriya Deyyo*" (by the Sun God) is an oath by which the Vedda vouches his good faith.

Like animals, concerned only with their immediate needs, they take the world very much as they find it. But if the aloof heavens leave their imaginations untouched, not so their immediate environment. Here exist real powers more within the pale of their comprehension, influencing every act of their lives, overshadowing their credulous minds, and affording at least some data on which to found a faith. Is it surprising then that they people Nature with sentient beings, unseen, but very evident by their acts. And what spirits more comprehensible to the primitive mind, more inspiratory of faith and fear, than those of one's

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Another strange thing about the Veddas, and one which may possibly be connected with their lack of humour, is the fact that every one of them is a George Washington, unable to tell a lie or to conceive of anyone else telling a lie.

They cannot even believe that any one would take the property of anyone else, and association with civilisation has failed to convince them that it is possible.

With all this—or, rather without all this—the Veddas are a peaceable, gentle, quiet people. They take wives without any marriage ceremony, and are faithful and constant to them, supporting them to death.

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own departed; spirits, real and intimate, inhabiting like themselves rock and tree and stream; human enough to pester or assist, to take vengeance if angered, and, if propitiated, tutelary over the Vedda's abodes. It is owing to the maliciousness of these spirits, and less from any fear of wild animals, that the Vedda is averse to travelling alone in the jungle; though, when necessity compels, he will do so, armed only with his little axe. Nor do they permit their women to adorn themselves too much for fear of attracting the *hetha* (devil).*

When a person dies it is the *hetha* that killed him; and the *hetha* of the dead one remains by the corpse and haunts the vicinity for years. Hence the great fear these people have of their dead; a fear that sometimes makes them cover with leaves and abandon a dying person, be he or she their best beloved, lest their necks be squeezed; a fear that keeps them away for years from caves where deaths have occurred.

In the course of time the spirit of a dead person loses its individuality in a general spirit world, the spirits of the more recently dead, and therefore the better known to succeeding generations, supplanting the older. A belief embodying the beautiful thought, that we really do not die until those who knew us and loved us are also dead.

The Vedda religion then is a cult of the spirits of the dead; not so much an ancestor worship, though a few names of long dead Veddas, such as Bilinde Yakka and Kande Yakka have a place in it, as a homage to spirits recently deceased (*Nae-Yakka*).†

The named demons of the pure Veddas are few, and their propitiatory ceremonies but two or three. Nevertheless, a half-Vedda devil-dancer of Galmede gave me the names of a hundred devils, and unctuously expounded a demonology as involved as it was terrible; taking special delight in describing a dance in which men with hideous masks and jangling bells attached to deer-skin greaves, their bodies stained in imitation of blood, swayed great Vedda *audes* mounted on carved handles, and made the forest echo to thundering drum-beats and demoniac yells.

Of male demons there were:—(1) Tree demons of the *Na* and *Bo* tree; seven to each tree in order of precedence: (2) Rock demons (*Gal-vanniyas*) named after various hills: (3) Flower demons (*Ravathath*): (4) *Bandara* demons; (5) *Vanniyas*—the spirits of four Veddas who were crushed to death in a cave by the fall of the rock overhead; with a shout of "ha" they were transformed into devils. Then there were innumerable female demons, a wife to each male demon (*Kalusalees*, *Peti-hanayas* and *Hanna-hanayas*).

From all this it will not be wondered at that the Veddas are highly superstitious, and ascribe to many an ordinary incident of life supernatural significance. It is, for instance, an ill omen to meet a Buddhist priest or Moorman when setting out on a journey, or to knock the big toe against a stone or stump. Should a gekko cry when a plan is under discussion, or a blood-sucker‡ or Brahamin lizard fall on one, the portent is bad.

*The Veddas seem to make no distinction between the words devil and spirit, the term *yakka* being used for either; thus *Gal-Yakka* means rock-demon, *Nae-Yakka* ancestral spirit. *Hetha* also means spirit or devil and is, if anything, the more malevolent being. *Vanuiya* is another word synonymous with *yakka* and *hetha*.

†The Veddas, by Seligmann; page 30.

‡A species of lizard.

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787 To ignore such warnings would be to court failure or even disaster. When a *kotaka* (large gekko) quaintly cries "krok, krok," a Vedda will seriously lean towards it and ask, "Shall we shoot a monkey to-morrow?" "Krok," says the *kotaka*, and the questioner's face falls, for here no answer is good news. Then there is that subtle thing the *hille*, an evil 778 influence possessed by certain kinds of meat when eaten under circum- 262 stances too involved to explain. The flesh of pigs, peafowl, langurs and a species of fish (*urang*, *monarang*, *wandoorang*, *magurang*) are said to have this property; but here it would seem that the rhyming of the names has something to do with their evil association.

776 There is an interesting little spirit, belief in which (as with many of the other superstitions already mentioned) is as universal among the Sinhalese as the Veddas. *Bolhili*, *Vilirany*, or *Kunnu-yakkini** (dirty she-devil) is its name. It is said to have a nasty nack of grasping one's leg in the dark, and so making it wither to the thinness of an *illuk*-blade. The incarnation of a woman who died in child-birth it is thought to be, and comes moaning at night in the form of a light. The story is best told in the words of a solemnly sworn eye-witness:—Kalu Banda (the narrator) and his sister Balahamy were occupying a watch-hut in a *kurrukhan* field one dark night when they heard a moaning as of one in pain—"*andoa, andoa, oo oo oo.*" Kalu Banda, suspecting what it was, told his sister not to speak—for the *villirany* is shy of women and vanishes at the sound of their voice. He then charmed a little oil, and placing it some distance away, called out, "If you have a stomach-ache, come, rub some oil, and go away." A shadow appeared at which Kalu Banda [825] fired. On going to the spot, what should he find but a green blood-sucker with a red head! This is said to be the invariable discovery when the *bodili* is killed. The same is said of the devil bird; but here apparently the rule has exceptions; for I have met several people who shot at devil birds, and had a bird to show.

825 The identity of the devil-bird—*ulama* or *ulalena*——is still a matter of doubt; and it is a pity that those who have had the rare fortune to shoot this bird have not thought it worth their while to send it up for identification. Much of the mystery surrounding it is due to the fact that it cries only at night and has wide and sporadic circuits. That it has some sort of a crest, I think, there can be no doubt; also that it is a large bird mottled in its breast feathers like a jungle-hen. These particulars all my reliable informants (who shot the bird as it cried at night) have independently confirmed. It is supposed to be the brown wood owl (*Surnium indrani*) by some, the *Huhua nepalensis* by others. The theory that different birds are capable of uttering the devil-bird's cry, is, I think, quite untenable. Its note is too invariable and distinctive for that.

825 The cry of the *ulama*, like that of the owl (*bakumuna*) and *hanga*, is 787 said to be a portent, varying according to its direction. Should it come from the west, it forbodes rain; from the east, good luck; from the north, the visit of a relative or friend; from the south, a death. One of these birds hovered about our camp one night uttering its blood-curdling calls, now from this direction, now from that, baffling the ingenuity of 825 its interpreters! Its "hoo-oo" is most eerily human; but it has an even worse note, a gurgling chuckle, strongly suggestive of a person

*This is perhaps none other than the Ceylon leris.

λ [a species of lizard.—Author]

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attributed to Sinhalese influence, especially the substitution of the mortar for the tripod, the drum for the slapping of hands and thighs, and the introduction of the coconut scraper and betel leaves.

The *hirihoraha* (milk-chatty)* dance has for its object the co-operation of certain ancestral spirits (*Nae Yakku*) in hunting enterprises. The occasion for it is a period of repeated ill luck, which is attributed to the disfavour of these spirits, whose names are, *Kande Yakka*, the great hunter, his brother *Bilinde Yakka* and their wives *Kudu Hora* (nest thief) and *Pol Hora* (coconut thief) respectively; also *Hath-kudu Hora* (seven-nests thief), elder brother of the two she demons. Significant signs in the ceremony are the fine bubbles that form when the coconut milk is handled, and the manner in which the coconut divides; if the halves are equal the omen is good, in unequal, bad.

In a clearing was placed a mortar and on it a bowl containing a coconut with two arrows laid across the brim. Kaurala, the dancer, took care to eat no meat that morning. Having smeared his head with lime-juice and his body with saffron, he would have worn a white cloth borrowed for the purpose, had we not dissuaded him from covering his picturesque nudity, much to the disapproval of the other Veddas who feared the anger of the spirits invoked.

The dance began quietly enough. Taking up the coconut and an arrow, the performer clasped them together in his hands which he placed now on the shoulder, now on the head, now well before him, as he walked round the mortar chanting a supplication to *Kande Yakka*. Soon he began hopping alternately on each heel, making half-turns with the body so characteristic of Vedda dances, and sweeping his arms semi-circularly. Gradually the monotonous song loudened to the drum-beats, and more and more vigorous became the contortions of the dancer, whose shaggy hair covered his face and whose body streamed with sweat. So he danced for perhaps a half hour, when suddenly he became as one possessed. *Kande Yakka* had "covered" him. Shouting the fearful name he staggered to the mortar and, bending over the bowl, split the coconut in halves. He stood by panting, while the coconut was scraped, the milk prepared, and seven betel leaves were arranged around the sides of the bowl, which was then replaced on the mortar with a single arrow across it. The other arrow, with a betel leaf transfixed in its point, was now in the hands of the dancer who holding it at both ends resumed his movements. *Bilinde Yakka*, the spirit next invoked, soon possessed him. The dance was then continued to each of the other spirits, male and female, in turn. By each of these he was successively possessed. With each possession the strange, wild-eyed figure before us, apparently oblivious of his surroundings, shouted the name of the mastering demon,† and threw lifeless hands on the shoulders of one or other of the onlookers as if for support. Eventually, when the frenzy was at its height, he had just breath enough to gasp out the inspired message that the spirits were propitious and success was assured‡. With his forearm he indicated the length of the quarry's horns and, pointing to the heavens, the favourable time for starting. Then, taking up the two arrows and the bowl containing the two halves of the coconut, the milk and the betel leaves, he danced

*Coconut milk is the juice obtained by squeezing out with water the scraped kernel of the coconut.

†*Puna kiyanawa.*

‡*Hoey gaigewera magalak alla thenawa.*

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Lastly, there is the *kengotuma* (deer-skin receptacle for the honey), or *yakka-katta* (devil's mouth) as it is reverently called out of deference to the tutelary demons of the rock, who might otherwise be angered and send the cutter to his doom.

A pile of firewood is now collected on top of the rock to protect the guardians of the ladder, while another heap is made by those below. All being ready they await the protecting darkness. When this comes the play begins. The great fire at the foot of the rock is lit and fed abundantly with green leaves; large volumes of smoke lick uncannily up the side of the hill towards the hives; now there is a stir among the bees. As the Veddas hear it their merriment waxes great: "*Bambaru, bambaru, bambaru; thapita, thapita, thapita. Ho bambaru thuapa**;" they cry. "*Giddi, giddi, giddi; rung, rung, rung,*" they jeer in imitation of the flight.

Meanwhile the fire above has been lighted, and two smoking *hulas* have been lowered towards the hives. The air is heavy with the ominous hum of angry bees.

Now is the time for the descent. The ladder, firmly secured to a tree or stone, and guarded by the brother-in-law of the cutter (the only person ineligible to marry his wife in the event of accident), is let down with a propitiatory incantation† to the demons of the rock and ancestral spirits. This being uttered, the hand grip is said to be strong and the feet to cling like jak milk to the stone.

With smoking *hulas* looped to forearms and *matha* slung on shoulder, and hair dishevelled over his face that the bees may not get at his eyes and nose, the cutter, gripping the cane with a single hand, disappears over the edge of the cliff into the darkness and the smoke. The ladder creaks as he feels his way down, for he sees nothing.

He has reached the level of the hives. At a signal the deer-skin receptacle is lowered to him, and this he secures to the ladder. Thrusting a leg between two rungs so that his foot is on the lower and his bent knee against the upper, and his head between two others so that the back of his neck is braced against a rung, he is free to use his hands. First he smokes the hives with the *hulas* mounted on the *matha* and drives away the lingering bees. Then, slinging the *hulas* on his forearms, he takes up the stake and, with its pointed end, cuts horizontally through the lower part of the comb, separating off the useless *yotha* with its contained grubs which the bees stoutly defend. He next cuts the comb in vertical sections, and, loosening each from its attachment, spits it with the pronged end of the stake, removes it, and shakes it into the receptacle at his knee. Thus he deals with all the hives.

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* "The bees, the bees, the bees; pile the fire, pile the fire, pile the fire. Ho! the bees run."

† *Yeththawa* it is called; and thus it goes:—

Haibos, haibos, haibos.
Me wathagang hetuhos marilchos,
Ahi upang nawaththagta mulki helawey.
Mulki wel epahara thennwa hithen.
Hamatheyan saulloun epawagana karyanahagena.
Tho kaday yanna, tho kaday yanna, tho kaday yanna.